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ABSTRACT

In the past decade, the nature of fathers' involvement with their children and families has become an important topic, with government agencies and nonprofit groups developing programs to help men manage the challenges of fatherhood. This report presents the first set of findings from the Bay Area Fathering Indicators Data System (BAyFIDS) Project, designed to track and analyze the operation and impact of fathering programs and describe the nature of local and county policy efforts around fatherhood in the San Francisco Bay Area. The report provides a baseline on participant needs, program and agency guidelines and effort, and the attitudes and values that stakeholders (program directors and staff, program participants, and county/municipal policymakers) bring to the issue of responsible fathering and family support. Following an introduction describing the emerging field of fatherhood and families, the report is presented in six chapters. Chapter 1 describes the municipal and regional context for the study, noting that a key concept in the focus on father involvement is responsible fathering. Chapter 2 describes the methodology of the study: site visits and focus groups with program staff and selected participants; and semi-structured telephone interviews with county-level staff and social and family services, public educational institutions, and the court system. Chapter 3 presents findings on the characteristics and needs of program participants. Chapter 4 provides a profile of fatherhood initiatives in the Bay Area, discussing their primary objectives, the services they provide, and the resources they possess. Chapter 5 discusses the findings on the role of county and government agencies in emerging fatherhood initiatives across the nine counties in the study. Chapter 6 contains a general conclusion that includes recommendations for programs, county agencies, and funding agencies. Three appendices include the survey instruments and national resources on fathers and families. (Contains 22 references.) (KB)

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A Report from the
Bay Area Fathering Indicators Data System (BAyFIDS) Project

Produced by

NCOFF
National Center on Fathers and Families

The National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF)
Graduate School of Education,
University of Pennsylvania

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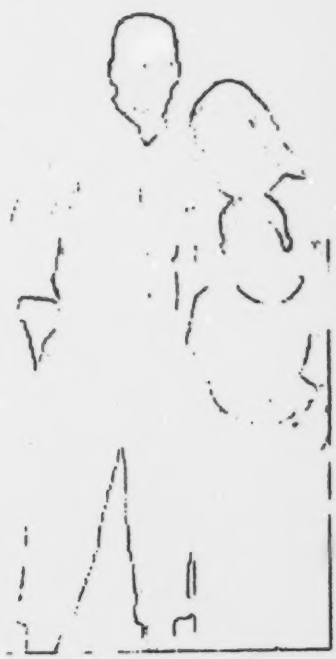

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About NCOFF

The National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) was established in 1994 at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education with core support from The Annie E. Casey Foundation. An interdisciplinary, practice-derived research center, NCOFF's primary goals are to:

- **Expand the knowledge base** on father involvement, family efficacy, and child well-being within multiple disciplines through research and development, integrated discussion, and information building;
- **Strengthen practice** through practitioner-targeted conversations, information dissemination, and collaborative activities; and
- **Contribute to critical policy discussions** by creating a coherent agenda of work that is built around existing and emerging local, state, and federal efforts.

NCOFF's research agenda includes a range of studies that use multiple methodological approaches. We focus on diverse populations of fathers and families—for example, minority families, two-parent families, those living in poverty, and those affected by welfare reform. Our primary research objective is to augment an existing, cross-disciplinary knowledge base on children, mothers, and families by encouraging the investigation of father-related issues that have emerged and those that have yet to be explored.

With few exceptions, the traditional assumption has been that knowledge flows from research to practice. NCOFF believes this perspective minimizes the potential of practice as a source of information and collaboration. Instead, we support the notion that the relationship between research and practice is bidirectional and reciprocal. Such a relationship can be achieved best by strengthening the links between researchers and practitioners, by establishing relationships of mutual learning, and by contributing to policy formulation.

NCOFF Core Learnings

NCOFF's research, practice, and policy activities have been developed around seven Core Learnings, which were distilled from the firsthand experiences of practitioners serving fathers, mothers, children, and families. The Core Learnings now serve as an organizing framework around which the Center conducts its work. They also provide the field with guidelines for examining, supporting, testing, and interrogating key issues.

The seven Core Learnings offer an important lens through which policymakers might learn more about the implications and impact of legislation and policy decisions on the lives of large numbers of fathers, mothers, children, and families. They also capture salient issues experienced and felt deeply by many fathers and families—those who are financially secure as well as those who are the most vulnerable to poverty and hardship.

The Seven Core Learnings on Fathers and Families

1. **Fathers care**—even if that caring is not shown in conventional ways.
2. **Father presence matters**—in terms of economic well-being, social support, and child development.
3. **Joblessness and unemployment** are major impediments to family formation and father involvement.
4. **Systemic barriers**—in existing approaches to public benefits, child support enforcement, and paternity establishment—operate to create obstacles and disincentives to father involvement. The disincentives are sufficiently compelling as to have prompted the emergence of a phenomenon dubbed "underground fathers," men who acknowledge paternity and are involved in the lives of their children but who refuse to participate as fathers in the formal systems.
5. **Co-parenting**—a growing number of young fathers and mothers need additional support to develop the vital skills needed to share parenting responsibilities.
6. **Role transitions**—the transition from biological father to committed parent has significant development implications for young fathers.
7. **Intergenerational learning**—the behaviors of young parents, both fathers and mothers, are influenced significantly by intergenerational beliefs and practices within their families of origin.

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Work on the Bay Area Fathering Integrated Data System (BAyFIDS) project and specifically on this report could not have been achieved without the generous support of a number of individuals and organizations. We extend our gratitude to our collaborators at the University of California-Berkeley Survey Research Center and SRI International. We also want to thank our project consultants, including Stanley Seiderman of the Bay Area Male Involvement Network; the individuals who served as practitioner-liaisons in the Bay Area; members of the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families; Ed Pitt of the Families and Work Institute; and Burt Barnow, an NCOFF-affiliated researcher, from the Institute for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University. We also wish to thank NCOFF staff who assisted in the production of this report: Susan Haidar, Dana Jones Robinson, Brendan Skwire, Herbert Turner, Jeong-Ran Kim, Kathy Brown, Michael Coffey, Jeanine Staples, and Jennifer Turri.

We are deeply appreciative to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, which funded this project, and particularly to our program officer, Alvertha Penny, who offered tireless support. We also thank NCOFF's core funder, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, as well as the Ford Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, for special support that informed our work on the BAyFIDS project.

We owe a special debt to the practitioners and policymakers who spoke with us and completed an exhaustive—and exhausting—telephone and mail survey. Several practitioners allowed us to visit their programs and, along with other staff members and program participants, shared with us their vision and expertise. For their support, we are deeply and immeasurably appreciative.

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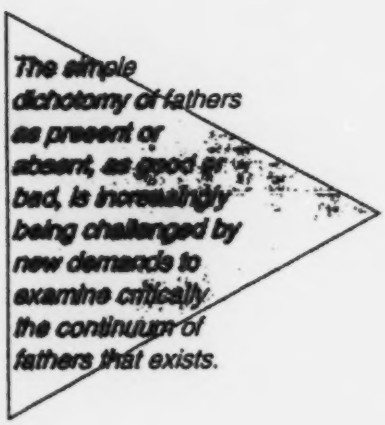
Executive Summary


The simple dichotomy of fathers as present or absent, as good or bad, is increasingly being challenged by new demands to examine critically the continuum of fathers that exists.

The profiles of fathers and fatherhood initiatives that emerged from the Bay Area Fathering Integrated Data System (BAyFIDS) project underscore the diversity inherent among fathers and in fathering itself—notions that are often construed as having a singular definition for a singular type of father. Our conversations with programs and participants in the San Francisco Bay Area indicated the range of experiences and needs that fathers exhibit: their different stations in life, different ages, different cultural and personal histories, and different lenses through which each views the world.

The simple dichotomy of fathers as present or absent, as good or bad, is increasingly being challenged by new demands to examine critically the continuum of fathers that exists: those who are residential or nonresidential, from a range of cultures and ethnicities, with varying relationships to the mother of their children, and with different socioeconomic backgrounds. Such a nuanced view of fathers and their experiences requires an examination of the complex relational factors involved in identifying and measuring appropriate fathering and parenting behaviors. It is against this backdrop of a changing perspective on fatherhood—images of men assuming roles beyond bill-paying (Coltrane, 1996) and projections of increasing numbers of children with fathers absent from their lives (National Commission on Children, 1993)—that efforts on fathers and families have emerged and have sought to establish a place within larger discussions of child and family support.

It is also against this backdrop that the National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) pursued the BAyFIDS project to track, document, and analyze the operation and impact of fathering programs, as well as the nature of local and county policy efforts around fatherhood. The purpose of BAyFIDS was to develop baseline data on participant needs, program capabilities, and agency efforts. We also sought to capture information on the attitudes and values held by program participants, program staff, and government agencies regarding the challenges of supporting men in their

roles as fathers, reducing father absence, and enhancing the welfare of children and families when fathers and their families face hardships.

This report presents the first set of findings from the BAyFIDS project. It is intended to supplement current and emerging efforts to catalogue the numbers of programs that have been created, to assess the policies that have been re-examined and reformulated, and to redirect the attention that fathering has received by the research community and the general public.

Setting the Context: From Father Absence to Father Presence

Father absence and, more broadly, father involvement have recently captured the interest of a broad cross-section of individuals and institutions concerned with the quality of life and support for children and families. A key concept in the focus on father involvement is "responsible fathering"—a term that in public discussions refers to a movement and within family studies to a field of inquiry. Work on responsible fathering and family support has expanded rapidly in a relatively short period—emerging as a community and societal issue, an area of practice and research, and an initiative of social and public policy over little more than five years. During that time, greater attention has focused not simply on father absence but also on father presence. What does it mean for children, families, and communities to have fathers actively and positively engaged? In other words, do children and families enjoy advantages when fathers are present? If that presence does matter, what difference does it make, and how can programs and policies ensure that they can help make a difference for children, families, communities, and fathers themselves?

Increasingly, these questions have become a topic of debate among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers serving children and families. The arguments in favor of deepening efforts on father involvement preferred by advocates and policymakers alike are straightforward: Children fare better and families and communities are stronger when fathers are engaged in their children's lives and when they contribute emotionally, physically, and financially to their children's and families' well-being.

Surveying the Field

To understand the structure and operation of fathering programs at the county level and to determine the degree of county agency involvement in programs in the San Francisco Bay Area, NCOFF launched the BAyFIDS project, with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and assistance by SRI International and the University of California-Berkeley. BAyFIDS, we expected, would provide baseline data on participant needs and program or agency capabilities. The project would also capture the attitudes and values held by program participants, program staff, and government agencies.

Work on responsible fathering and family support has emerged as a community and societal issue, an area of practice and research, and a focus of social and public policy in less than five years.

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Our prior work with programs throughout the country and our conversations with practitioners and policymakers in local areas had led us to believe that, as with many new efforts, fatherhood programs were still poorly defined and their goals still in a state of flux. As we considered how to construct the BAyFIDS project, we were aware of two realities:

- There is little information about the number or quality of existing programs or the needs and aspirations of program participants.
- There is still relatively little knowledge among policymakers, social services, and educational agencies about existing programs.

Thus, we designed the BAyFIDS project to enhance our knowledge of local programs—their objectives, service populations, practices, strengths, and challenges—and to offer insights on the enduring questions about the mechanisms that affect the lives of participating fathers, their children and families, and their communities.

Why Focus on the San Francisco Bay Area? California and the Bay Area possess unique features that make this region an appropriate focus of our study on fathers and families programs and their relationships to county fatherhood initiatives. Like most states, California divides responsibility for child support and services to fathers between a variety of state departments, county offices, and local agencies. The rise in the number of nonwhite citizens and those emigrating from outside the United States—coupled with growing income inequality and relative uncertainty about sectors of the state's economy—make the Bay Area a compelling case to compare with other regions in the nation, particularly those with large urban and metropolitan areas.

Why Focus on County Programs and Policies? Although most states (California included) delegate responsibility for child welfare, family support, and child support collections to local and county government, very little is known about how these agencies seek to support fathers. Instead, policy conversations usually occur at the state and national levels and research efforts tend to focus on state and federal policy. Even less is known about how public and private efforts are coordinated with one another, if at all. Because policy and implementation varies from county to county, the nature of public-private coordination will also vary by county. Thus, we felt it was important to study county systems as a whole.

While local fatherhood programs could serve as an obvious point of departure in launching coherent and coordinated fatherhood initiatives, many states remain disconnected from programmatic efforts at the local level.

The BAyFIDS Approach: Multiple Stakeholders, Multiple Data Collections

To pursue the project's core goals—deepening the field's knowledge of fathers and families programs, the participants in them, and the potential for programs to contribute to integrated activities that support children and families—NCOFF developed two resources:

- *The Bay Area Fathering Programs Directory*—a comprehensive, regularly updated directory of fathering programs, currently

accessible through the World Wide Web (www.bayfids.org) and available in paper form from NCOFF.

- *The Father Programs Dataset (FPD)*—a database containing information on participant characteristics; program services and problems; program relationships with county agencies; and measures of county officials' knowledge about efforts in their region, as well as their engagement with those efforts.

It was critical to interview program directors, staff members, and program participants to understand better how programs operate, what goals they pursue and why, and what both program staff and participants hope to achieve.

Unlike other studies focused on well-developed and well-defined fields and constituencies, the BAyFIDS project had much background work to do. Before beginning data collection, we:

- Conducted analyses on the status of child welfare and family support in the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma;
- Became familiar with demographic changes in the Bay Area, including the number of mother-headed households, poverty rates, families affected by welfare reform, and child welfare statistics;
- Assessed fathering issues through a review of reports on poverty rates, single-mother households, and child and family welfare in the Bay Area, as well as through direct observation of programs and conversations with contacts in the Bay Area;
- Developed typologies of programs;
- Created inventories of program services and objectives, as well as participant needs and challenges;
- Sought out and catalogued potential sponsors of fathering programs; and
- Constructed a network of practitioner liaisons to assist us with our data collection activities.

Based on the information provided by these sources, we arrived at a data collection strategy that hinged on three premises. First, it was clear that no one group of stakeholders would be able to provide us with the data we required to study both fathering programs and the policies that supported them. Instead, we needed to gather information from all three groups of principal stakeholders: program directors and staff, program participants, and county/municipal policymakers. Second, since it was clear that no one group could act as a single principal informant, it was also evident that we had to match our data collection methods to the needs and preferences of each stakeholder group. Finally, because so little work exists on the questions we wished to study, it was imperative that we use multiple data collection methods and multiple stakeholder perspectives for each research question.

In all, three different data collection strategies were employed: a mail and a telephone survey for program staff; site visits and focus groups with program staff and selected participants; and semi-structured telephone interviews with county-level staff in social and family services, public educational institutions, and the court system.

The Phase I Report

Our intention in this report is to provide a baseline on participant needs, program and agency capabilities and effort, and the attitudes and values all three stakeholders bring to the issue of responsible fathering and family support. This information comes with a range of complexities, not limited to any single set of issues, problems, or needs.

Throughout the report, we point out some of these complexities, focusing on how our "raw" empirical findings are at variance with the expectations and beliefs of programs as expressed both in responses to the surveys and in interviews during our site visits. We also discuss how some findings may be related to known issues of participant needs and expectations, revealed in the relationships and disparities between participant needs and expectations and provider capabilities, values, goals, and expectations.

The evolving discussion around fathers and families typically takes place at the federal and state levels. Little work focuses on efforts at the county or municipal levels or within diverse communities.

Specifically, in Chapter 3 of the full report, we present our findings on the characteristics and needs of program participants, based upon reported data from program staff. Chapter 4 provides a profile of fatherhood initiatives in the Bay Area, discussing their primary objectives, the services they provide, and the resources they possess. In Chapter 5, we discuss our findings on the role of county and government agencies in emerging fatherhood initiatives across the nine counties in the study. Each of these chapters concludes with a perspective on the findings for either participants, the programs with which they were affiliated, or the government agencies in each county. Finally, Chapter 6 contains a general conclusion that includes our reflections on the findings and recommendations for programs, county agencies, and funders.

Reflections on the Findings

Overall, the data we collected provide a clear image about the durability of the programs over time; the inconsistencies between programs' larger goals to support fathers and their willingness or ability to invest in basic educational, personal, employment training, and pregnancy prevention efforts; and the emerging but still limited connection between local fathering programs and county efforts for children and families. The data also identify a set of challenging circumstances within programs themselves: practitioners face day-to-day issues in implementing programs and securing funding; the duration of a father's participation is not guaranteed; "progress" and "success" are hard to measure because most programs (like their peers nationally) do not use a set curriculum; programs have had equivocal success in securing community involvement in their and others' efforts to support fathers and families; and local programs and county agencies rarely share ideas or funding. These overarching issues have specific relevance when examined from the perspectives of programs and practitioners, participants, and county-level agencies.

Issues for Programs and Practitioners. In many aspects, fathering programs in the Bay Area are more advanced than similar initiatives in other

regions of the United States, particularly in the comprehensive perspectives held by many practitioners who work with early childhood education and child care. At the same time, shortfalls in the number, staffing, and capacity of these programs has caused them to be insufficiently developed and self-sustaining to attend to the range and severity of issues that confront many fathers and their children and families.

- **The Number and Primary Focus of Fathering Programs.** As of Spring 2000, an estimated 154 programs in the Bay Area provided some form of fathering support. However, this figure may not reflect the full number of programs that attend to issues of parenting for men. Many organizations that provide services to fathers do not view themselves as being primarily involved in this area of social services and often do not self-identify as being fathering programs or having as a fathering component. While it is not immediately apparent from the survey data, this finding may indicate that organizations which socially construct themselves as "schools," "child care centers," or "adult education programs" may underutilize the resources—fiscal and otherwise—that are available from governmental and private sources to support fathering. One area for future research is to explore how the social construction of social services organizations may help or hinder their ability and willingness to provide services to fathers.
- **The Diversity and Organization of Fathering Programs.** These programs are diverse in mission, ranging from improving early child care or early childhood education, to supporting men in their roles as fathers, to assisting incarcerated fathers. On the other hand, a feature of many county-supported efforts is their focus on child support enforcement. At the same time, fathering programs focus on issues ranging from male involvement to the prevention of teen pregnancy; they are likely both to be located in larger parent organizations and to exist as freestanding initiatives, unattached to any official agency, institution, or organization.
- **The Communities of Fathers Targeted for Services.** A larger number of initiatives in our study focus on fathers across income levels—particularly on middle-income white fathers—than would probably be found in other parts of the state. This bias may be due to two factors: a large share of the programs we studied are male involvement programs, and the demography of the Bay Area is diverse. Still, most programs are likely to focus on noncustodial fathers in general, although many such as Head Start and early childhood education programs are focusing increasingly on fathers in and outside of the home. Fathering programs in the Bay Area are not always targeted to low-income fathers but do overwhelmingly focus most of their services on low-income, noncustodial fathers. Some are addressing issues of gay fathers.

With the emergence of fathers and families as an important area of research, practice, and policy, questions are increasingly being raised about the form, function, and feasibility of programs.

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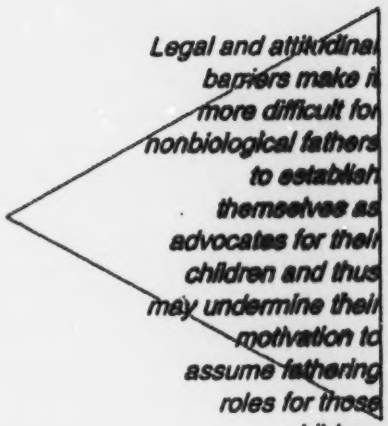
- **The Resource and Funding Shortfall.** Not unlike programs throughout the United States, fathering programs in the Bay Area are functioning with few resources, both in terms of funding and staff. This shortage of support is affecting the number of services that programs can provide, as well as the quality of the services provided. The programs that serve fathers who have the fewest resources—young, minority, noncustodial fathers with limited schooling and inadequate employment or employment preparation—are often vulnerable themselves. In addition, these programs typically offer short-term services, a situation that is at odds with the severity of the problems and scope of need presented by the entering father.
- **The Strengths and Weaknesses of Program Staff.** Most programs have few staff, and most staff members, other than the director, do not have professional training. However, practitioners in Bay Area fathers and families programs typically represent a broad cross-section of experience, professional expertise, and programmatic interest. Although many do not have professional experience in this area, they bring a wide range of talents to the programs and processes of supporting fathers—expertise that exists outside formal training but is often vital to identifying and supporting the needs of fathers in many programs. In addition, for most programs, a paucity of male staff either for fathering-related programs or for child-centered services has become a critical concern. Programs often search for an extended period before identifying appropriate male staff members. Because these men are in demand, turnover of male staff after only a short period of employment is very high. While program directors clearly value having male role models on staff, to date they have not discovered effective ways to recruit and retain them.
- **The Barriers to Father Involvement Embedded in Social Services.** Despite increased awareness across different types of programs, staff in child care centers or schools often actively discourage fathers—especially noncustodial fathers—from participating in programs or activities with their children. Staff members' attitudes may help to foster and reinforce the notion that fathers have no role in schools, child care centers, and other places where social services are provided. Additionally, these attitudes may inhibit the development of fathering support services within these social services environments. We do not know how widespread this phenomenon is or what the roots of these attitudes might be—for example, such father-negative attitudes may be related to the racial or ethnic composition of a program's surrounding neighborhood. Regardless, providing better services to fathers may depend on

California and the Bay Area possess unique features that make this region an appropriate focus of our study on fathers and families programs and their relationships to county fatherhood initiatives.

finding effective ways to address these attitudinal barriers.

- **Legal and Attitudinal Barriers to Nonbiological Father Involvement.** Legal and attitudinal barriers to the involvement of nonbiological fathers—those who have no legal relationship to the children in question but who fulfill the fathering role—often create a significant barrier to their participation in programs. Most educational and child care agencies are legally barred from allowing nonbiological fathers a voice in the education and/or care of the children for which they have accepted *de facto* responsibility. Such legal and attitudinal barriers make it more difficult for nonbiological fathers to establish themselves as advocates for their children and thus may undermine their motivation to assume fathering roles for these children.


Legal and attitudinal barriers make it more difficult for nonbiological fathers to establish themselves as advocates for their children and thus may undermine their motivation to assume fathering roles for those children.

Issues for Program Participants. Both practitioners' descriptions of participants and participants' own accounts in our focus groups indicated a particularly difficult set of circumstances facing many Bay Area fathers.

- **The Diversity of Need.** Increased attention to fathering in the Bay Area has helped to expand the number of programs that attend to issues of fathering and male involvement. However, these programs are diverse, and there is no coordination or comprehensive attention to the range of fathers' needs. The diversity of those needs include divorced fathers who are concerned about custody and visitation; those seeking support networks as they become single parents; those who are wrestling with questions about the quantity and quality of their involvement; and those who intend to deepen their commitment to parenting cooperatively with the mothers of their children.
- **The Scope of Difficulties Facing Young Fathers.** Young, low-income, noncustodial fathers represent the largest group of fathers served in Bay Area fatherhood programs. They often demonstrate concern about their children and a desire to contribute positively to their children's lives. However, they are often confronted with multiple problems, including limited education and employment potential; difficult relationships with the mothers of their children and the child's maternal extended family; and barriers created by a lack of support from their own families of origin and their friends. Developmentally, these men are often overwhelmed with the expectations of their new roles as fathers.
- **The Inattention to Physical and Mental Health Issues.** Issues of fathers' physical and mental health are critical yet relatively unexamined. One site in particular (the Mexican American Community Service Agency, or MACSA, in Gilroy) noted the importance of providing mental health services as an integrated aspect of services offered to fathers. In fact, the staff at MACSA believe their

program's success is largely tied to their ability to package a range of several services for fathers, including mental health.

- **The Constraints on Participation.** From the perspectives of practitioners, the barriers to father involvement include time constraints due to holding multiple/informal jobs; institutional and attitudinal barriers; low educational attainment; and (to a lesser extent) discouragement from peers, families, and authority figures. These barriers increase in severity as fathers' income decrease.

Issues for County-Level Agencies. County-level activities have the potential to bridge state and local initiatives and expand the work of local programs, but they require a deeper knowledge of the field and of the programs already in place in order to promote that work.

- **The Potential for Support.** Efforts at the county level include initiatives based in both social services agencies and educational contexts. County agencies are as much in the business of providing programs as supporting them, particularly those focused on child support enforcement and related work.
- **The Location of County Effort.** Where issues of fathering fit into county agency work is difficult to ascertain. An initiative may exist at the county level. However, it may be promoted and/or implemented by child support enforcement authorities, family services agencies, or schools. It is unclear how decisions are made about where an effort is best placed.
- **The Lack of Knowledge Held by County Policymakers and Practitioners.** County-level policymakers and staff often demonstrate enthusiasm about the work of fatherhood initiatives but know little about programs or the broader context of fathering.
- **The Lack of a Systematic Approach.** There is no evidence of a systematic approach to integrating fatherhood in county-level initiatives on children and families.

The barriers to father participation in programs increase as fathers' incomes decrease.

Primary Challenges. From our review of findings on Bay Area fathering programs, we have identified five primary factors that challenge the provision of services, whether in programs or in social services agencies:

- **A mismatch between the expectations providers have of participants and participants' capabilities and challenges.** In many cases, providers develop biased or unrealistic expectations—both too ambitious and too limited—of what participants want, need, or will seek out. As a result, agencies and programs often develop services that are targeted toward unexpressed needs.
- **A mismatch between participant expectations and providers capabilities, values, and goals.** Participants may develop misapprehensions of what providers are seeking to achieve or what they can achieve. On the one hand, participants may misunderstand or overestimate the goals of the program—for example, believing that agency programs are really meant to "lure" them into the child

support enforcement system. Alternatively, participants may believe programs offer hard-to-find services—like legal counsel—which they, in fact, cannot provide. In these cases, services go unused or programs experience retention problems.

- **The imposition of external constraints.** Providers may accurately apprehend the needs of participants but be constrained from meeting those needs by external dictates. For instance, agencies whose primary mission is to collect child support may acknowledge the need for educational enrichment or psychological assessment but be unable to provide it due to restrictions on the use of funds. Similarly, participants may be externally constrained: their work or family life may impinge on their ability to seek out or use services on a regular basis.
- **Insufficient provider capabilities.** Providers may accurately apprehend the needs of participants but lack the financial resources or expertise necessary to undertake the required services. This services shortfall may be particularly true in cases when specific expertise around mediation, literacy, domestic violence, and related areas is needed.
- **A misdiagnosis by participants of their capabilities and challenges.** Because participants in fathering programs are usually not mandated to participate, they must accurately assess their own abilities as fathers before they seek services or support. The transition to fatherhood, as research on role transitions suggests, presents challenges for fathers of all ages and income levels. Young or first-time fathers, particularly those with few resources, may lack the information necessary to assess their own knowledge gaps. In these cases, the services that programs provide may go unused because the potential participants do not recognize either their own capabilities or challenges.

Perhaps the greatest challenge—and question—is the degree to which programs and county agencies can initiate conversations that allow for the creation of more seamless father-supporting efforts.

Recommendations

We are acutely aware of the contradictions in recommending courses of action for programs that often do not have the funding to implement those improvements. The broader problems, however, are not only issues of funding but also of capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and the effective utilization of existing services. Perhaps the greatest challenge—and question—is the degree to which programs and county agencies can initiate conversations that ultimately result in the creation of more seamless efforts and enduring, positive change for children, their fathers and mothers, their families, and their communities.

We are equally aware of the limitations of the data. Although the survey data from this first phase of the BAyFIDS project yield useful information about programs, they do not reveal the embedded issues facing fathering programs, fathers and families, and communities, nor do they

The broader problems are not only issues of funding but also capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and the effective utilization of services.

explore integrated approaches that support children and families.

With an acknowledgment of both the strengths and limitations of the data, we make several recommendations for programs, county agencies, and funders to pursue.

For ***Bay Area fathering programs***, we recommend that they:

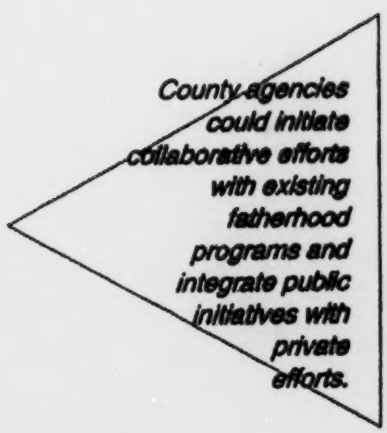
- Focus directly on developing a curriculum to direct their activities, in part to help them determine what works and why;
- Challenge themselves to move away from immersion in familiar, traditional, or "easy" approaches to attract and sustain men's participation and invest in activities such as literacy, parenting, mental health, and workforce development that will help men over the long-term;
- Consider themselves as the center of a service network, since they typically have expertise in specific areas but must access and think strategically about how to utilize their own resources to help participants find the other services they need—especially around education, legal assistance, and mental health care;
- Utilize that service network not only to support father participants but also to identify, prepare, and support staff members;
- Assert themselves within county and state efforts and rely less on county agencies to seek them out; and
- Create a strategic plan for recruiting and retaining participants and staff, particularly for the recruitment of male staff members, as well as for preparing staff to contend with the diversity of the populations served, their long-term needs, and the role of the program in helping them attend to these needs.

For ***Bay Area county agencies***, we recommend that they:

- Become more knowledgeable of programs within their boundaries;
- Initiate collaborative efforts with existing fatherhood programs and more thoroughly integrate public initiatives with ongoing private efforts, in part because many fathers are reluctant to join publicly-sponsored efforts;
- Consider how state- and county-level agencies, such as labor and justice departments, can become credible fathering services providers (for example, our data found that these departments could—but rarely do—fund fathering efforts);
- Determine how data collection on fathers and fathering would help to inform service provision, since very little data is currently collected and/or shared across agencies or with programs; and
- Create strategic plans around fathering initiatives that address how data on fathers will be included and used in databases on children and families, how staff members will come to understand the integration of fatherhood in existing child and family support activities, and how staff should respond to new initiatives and mandates around father involvement.

For ***Bay Area foundations and other funding communities,*** we recommend that they:

- Help to foster dialogue between public and private sector fatherhood efforts, particularly social services and child welfare;
- Provide funding for programs to establish curricula and to revise these curricula as needs change;
- Sponsor programs to help create community support networks, for example among fathering/male involvement programs, literacy/educational programs, and mental health programs;
- Support research that examines systematically which practices are most efficacious for which types of father/family combinations;
- Support research that identifies ways of creating supportive knowledge-sharing relationships between programs and practitioners, particularly around monitoring and measuring change in participants' fathering behaviors; and
- Challenge fathering/male involvement programs to develop interventions that address at least one aspect of their basic needs, such as some form of educational intervention for both child and parent.


County agencies could initiate collaborative efforts with existing fatherhood programs and integrate public initiatives with private efforts.

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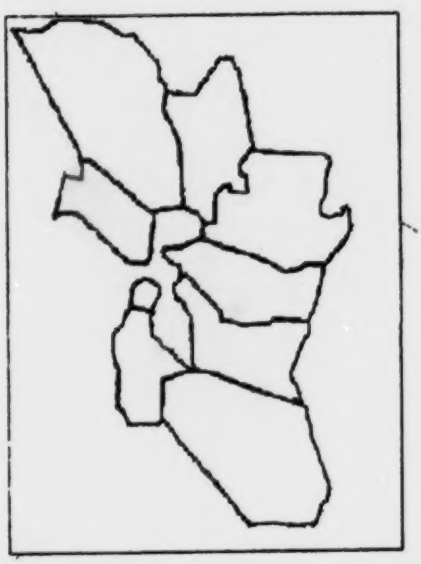
Bay Area Fathering Initiatives: Portraits and Possibilities

For too long, references to "families" meant "mothers." The result? Fathers receded into the background—in their importance to the child and his or her mother, except as a source of financial support. To correct this imbalance... [we must] reach schools and community-based organizations and...raise their awareness of the barriers they place in the way of father involvement.

Stanley Seiderman, San Anselmo Preschool Center



INTRODUCTION

THE EMERGING FIELD OF FATHERHOOD AND FAMILIES

In recent years, father involvement has emerged as an important social issue, and its nature and status have become salient factors for improving the futures of children and families. Yet, many approaches to the discussion of fatherhood rely on prevailing notions of who fathers are and what roles they play in their children's lives. The profiles of fathers and fatherhood initiatives that emerged from the Bay Area Fathering Integrated Data System (BAyFIDS) project underscore the diversity inherent among fathers and in fathering itself—notions that are often construed as having a singular definition for a singular type of father. Our conversations with programs and participants in the San Francisco Bay Area indicated the range of experiences and needs that fathers exhibit: their different stations in life, different ages, different cultural and personal histories, and different lenses through which each views the world.

The simple dichotomy of fathers as present or absent, as good or bad, is increasingly being challenged by new demands to examine critically the continuum of fathers that exists.

The simple dichotomy of fathers as present or absent, as good or bad, is increasingly being challenged by new demands to examine critically the continuum of fathers that exists: those who are residential or nonresidential, from a range of cultures and ethnicities, with varying relationships to the mother of their children, and with different socioeconomic backgrounds. Such a nuanced view of fathers and their experiences requires an examination of the complex relational factors involved in identifying and measuring appropriate fathering and parenting behaviors. It is against this backdrop of a changing perspective on fatherhood—images of men assuming roles beyond bill-paying (Coltrane, 1996) and projections of increasing numbers of children with fathers absent from their lives (National Commission on Children, 1993)—that efforts on fathers and families have emerged and have sought to establish a place within larger discussions of child and family support.

It is also against this backdrop that NCOFF pursued the BAyFIDS project to track, document, and analyze the operation and impact of fathering programs, as well as the nature of county policy efforts around fatherhood. The purpose of BAyFIDS was to develop baseline data on

Carlos is a married 27-year-old father of three who emigrated from Central America. He has attended a male involvement program focused on fathering for two years. His goals reflect those of thousands of other men who are fathers: He wants a good life for his family and children, as well as for himself. He describes these goals with deliberateness to demonstrate his increasing facility with and fluency in English and his marketability for the workforce. His enthusiasm and smile are noticeable as he talks about his visions and hopes, his images of a time when he can move his wife and children out of public housing and into a "good neighborhood," and about his unassailable aspirations to be a good father—to talk to his children, read to them, ensure that they receive a good education, and "be there" for them in ways that approach his most basic motivations for coming to the United States.

Pedro, another father in the program, is about the same age as Carlos. Although he echoes Carlos' sentiments, it is unclear whether he is motivated by the same passions or the same knowledge of possible goals and options for the future. He is separated from the mother of his son and usually sees his son once a week. He is experiencing some difficulty gaining access to his son, who as a first-grader is having problems with classwork in school. From his description, which he provides in Spanish, he is visibly concerned. His words about his son and the problems he is facing in school are threaded with a clear query to the interviewers, asking implicitly what he can do to help his son in the face of opposition to his involvement and his limited knowledge of English and the educational system.

Jim, the director of the program that Carlos and Pedro attend, is a middle-aged father of adolescent and young adult children. Middle-class and white, Jim's life experiences appear on the surface to be markedly different from those of Carlos and Pedro. Jim has the educational, linguistic, and social access to increase his ability to provide for his children and family. Similar to Carlos and Pedro, Jim has struggled with the issues of what it means to be a "good father," making decisions about the quality of life he should pursue and what he wants to make possible for his children. His commitment to fathering, to his spouse and family, and to the work of improving the well-being of children are practiced in the private sphere of his home, where his own fathering practices are on display. These practices are also evident in the public sphere through the program and among the families and communities that witness the fathering behaviors that Carlos and Pedro exhibit, whether their behaviors are positive and noncombative or negative and potentially harmful.

—Descriptions of three men in a Bay Area fathering program, 1999

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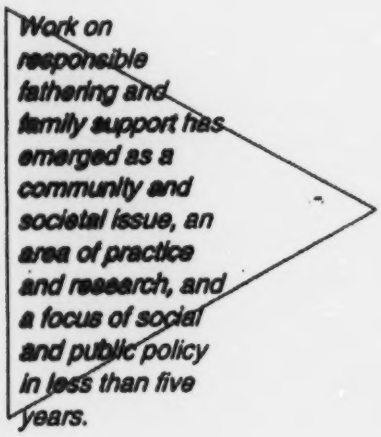
participant needs, program capabilities, and agency effort. We also sought to capture information on the attitudes and values held by program participants, program staff, and government agencies regarding the challenges of supporting men in their roles as fathers, reducing father absence, and enhancing the welfare of children and families when fathers and their families face hardships.


Work on responsible fathering and family support has emerged as a community and societal issue, an area of practice and research, and a focus of social and public policy in less than five years.

This report presents the first set of findings to emerge from the BAyFIDS project. It is intended to supplement current and emerging efforts to catalogue the numbers of programs that have been created, to assess the policies that are being examined or re-examined, and to bring attention to issues that the research community and the general public have, to date, passed over.

Responsible Fathering in Research, Practice, and Programs

Father absence and, more broadly, father involvement have recently captured the interest of a broad cross-section of individuals and institutions concerned with the quality of life and support for children and families. A key concept in the focus on father involvement is "responsible fathering"—a term that in public discussions refers to a movement and within family studies to a field of inquiry. Work on responsible fathering and family support has expanded rapidly in a relatively short period—emerging as a community and societal issue, an area of practice and research, and an initiative of social and public policy over little more than five years. During that time, greater attention has focused not simply on father absence but also on father presence. What does it mean for children, families, and communities to have fathers actively and positively engaged? In other words, do children and families enjoy advantages when fathers are present? If that presence does matter, what difference does it make, and how can programs and policies ensure that they can help make a difference for children, families, communities, and fathers themselves?

Increasingly, these questions have become a topic of debate among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers serving children and families. Ross Parke, in his 1996 publication *Fatherhood*, describes the tension that existed throughout the twentieth century between forces that pulled for greater participation from fathers and opposing influences that pushed for their restraint and absence. Much of that tension persists today in this burgeoning fatherhood movement and research effort. However, the arguments in favor of deepening efforts on father involvement proffered by advocates and policymakers alike are straightforward: Children fare better and families and communities are stronger when fathers are engaged in their children's lives and when they contribute emotionally, physically, and financially to their children's and families' well-being.

Father-Focused Research. In general, researchers agree that what fathers do with and for their children is much more important than whether

fathers simply co-reside or have frequent contact with them (Coltrane, 1996; Parke, 1996). Although using marital status or living arrangements as a measure can be useful in the initial assessment of potential father-child contact, such structural approaches leave unaddressed the actual variations in father involvement in both "father-present" and "father-absent" homes (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994). Consequently, the most important recommendation to emerge from the fatherhood literature may be that measurement strategies should move past the presence/absence dichotomy to distinguish among different forms of father-child involvement across culture and ethnicity, household type, and marital or legal status.

Many public discussions focus on the concept of "responsible fathering," but research studies are still unclear about what the characteristics of a responsible or competent father actually are (Dollahite, Hawkins, and Brotherson, 1997; Gadsden, Fagan, Ray, and Davis, 2001; Levine and Pitt, 1995; Pollack, 1995). In particular, Levine and Pitt suggest that a man who behaves responsibly towards his child and family:

- Waits to make a baby until he is prepared emotionally and financially to support his child;
- Establishes his legal paternity if and when he does make a baby;
- Actively shares with the child's mother in the continuing emotional and physical care of their child, from pregnancy onwards; and
- Shares with the child's mother in the continuing financial support of their child, from pregnancy onwards (Levine and Pitt, 1995, p. 5).

Examinations of involvement tend to distinguish between fathers' engagement, availability, and responsibility. Engagement refers to the father's direct interaction or contact with his child through caregiving and shared activities. Availability is a related concept concerning the father's potential availability for interaction, by virtue of being present or being accessible to the child (whether or not direct interaction is occurring). Responsibility refers to the role that a father takes in ascertaining that the child is cared for and arranging for the availability of resources (Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine, 1987).

Even today, responsibility is one of the least-studied and even less well-understood aspects of fathering. This form of involvement, as the definition above suggests, refers to the managerial functions of parenting, including the ways in which fathers organize opportunities for their children to participate in a wide range of activities and experiences. Here, it is important to distinguish between within-family and extra-family management: in the former case, parents organize the child's home environment by making certain parts of the home (such as the playroom) and/or certain objects (such as toys and games) available, while limiting access to other parts (such as the dining room) and/or objects (such as guns and fragile objects). In addition, fathers play a role as provider and/or restrictor of opportunities for interaction with other social agents and institutions outside the family. This role includes providing access to other play and recreational partners by

Even today, father responsibility is one of the least-studied and even less well-understood aspects of fathering.

regulating children's contact with these individuals; regulating access to schools, churches, and organized recreational opportunities (for example, sports); and taking children on informal walks, trips, and outings.

While some areas of agreement exist, there is no consensus among researchers about issues related to fathers and families. However, the presence of a debate may be interpreted as an example of the vibrancy of the topic and its status as a newly formed subset of family studies. In the past, academic research on families focused on mothers or children; only recently have researchers become concerned with testing specific hypotheses about fathers. Similarly, most government-sponsored, policy-oriented family research has focused on mothers rather than fathers, even when men were present in the home. As fathering becomes a new emphasis in the family studies field, debate on the nature of fathers' roles—particularly in reference to mothers' roles—will no doubt flourish in the literature.

In fact, since 1994 the number of published studies and articles on fathering has increased significantly, and now cut across a range of disciplines and domains. The field is growing, and such growth must include a focus on diverse cultural, class, and ethnic groups of fathers and families. A number of research studies are underway to expand the limited literature on fathers from ethnic minority groups; low-income fathers; noncustodial, nonresidential fathers; never-married fathers; adolescent fathers; and working poor fathers. At the same time, the field continues to examine issues faced by both absent fathers and fathers present in the home, whose interactions with their children may vary by income, history, race, class, and culture and in ways that we have yet to understand fully.

Like most academic and policy research, family assistance programs have typically focused on mothers and children—leaving fathers out or even discouraging their participation.

Father-Focused Programs. Like most academic and policy research, family assistance programs have typically focused on mothers and children—leaving fathers out or even discouraging their participation. Newer programs embrace a variety of specific goals related to the encouragement of father-child connectedness. Program goals often include increasing paternity establishment at birth, teaching parenting skills to new fathers, increasing men's compliance with child support payments, fostering continuing positive contact between fathers and children, and enhancing father-child relations. These programs often serve specific target populations and are typically part of integrated services designed for the benefit of at-risk populations.

Father-focused programs vary in several ways—clearly, *one size does not fit all.* First, they differ by clientele or participant: some programs focus primarily on nonresident, noncustodial, low-income fathers, while others are directed at resident fathers across income levels. Second, programs differ in their original missions. Some programs are established to serve fathers only, while others provide a range of support and resources to fathers and men in general. Other programs differ in the services they provide, with some offering general parent education services, early childhood education, or literacy assistance. Third, programs differ according to the focus of their effort. Several programs are dedicated to workforce development, entrepre-

neurship, or employment training, while some emphasize paternity establishment and child support. Still others are attempting to help fathers reconnect with their children after a long-term absence. Fourth, programs differ in their ability to provide regular supports to participants and community members. Finally, they differ by funding sources and financial stability.

In newly emerging fields in which a real or perceived urgency exists, it is often true that the apparent need outweighs the incentive for initiatives to create a systematic approach or to address systemic issues. To some degree, this problem looms over fatherhood practice and programming, which have grown more rapidly than the accompanying knowledge base. Information is lacking on what resources exist, what initiatives have been implemented, and with what effects. This disparity in the growth of programs and the knowledge base is exacerbated by the fact that, until the previous decade, research studies provided only limited data on fathers. However, any cursory review of the state of father involvement research today would reveal a significant increase in the number and variety of studies on fatherhood over the past decade. On the other hand, a similar examination of research on programs would reveal a remarkable dearth of work.

Fathering programs, in everyday terms, are the bedrock of the fatherhood effort in the United States; the issues they raise help to advance responsible fathering to the top of national and state agendas. Organizations such as the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families provide compelling evidence of the magnitude and intensity of fathering activities. They acknowledge that programs may be established as freestanding collectives, components of newly developed family programs, and new divisions within traditionally mother- and child-focused programs in family and human services agencies, school systems and other educational institutions, and the courts. In addition, fathering program demonstrations are also likely to address child support, Head Start and Early Head Start, and children's schooling.[2]

Ephesians Children's Center

Occasionally, programs require a catalyzing event to help them blossom. According to Executive Director Newt McDonald, such an event is exactly what energized a male involvement program at Ephesians Children's Center. The Center serves a low-income, inner-city neighborhood where "drug trafficking" and violence are prevalent. It had operated a small male involvement program "as far back as the War on Poverty," says McDonald, and was involved with the Bay Area Male Involvement Network (BAMIN) from the network's early days. However, the program at Ephesians only gained momentum after the male involvement group worked to reclaim a park from drug dealers and gang members. The men in the community, working with Ephesians, banded together to stabilize the neighborhood, creating a space for men and children to interact. For this group, male involvement means creating effective male intervention in city and police affairs in order to create a safer environment for their children.

Unlike other programs, the Ephesians group actively recruits neighborhood men who have no children or no children living at home. Not only does this strategy increase the "mass" of activists in the community seeking to combat drugs and other forms of instability, it also provides younger fathers with role models and children with a sense that men throughout the community stay involved in child caregiving and development.

Like other programs, Ephesians reports difficulty in recruiting male staff. For McDonald, this problem is a priority because he believes the Center must expose children to men—especially men of color—who have pursued higher education and are employed in professions. McDonald seeks to create activities where men from both the university community in Berkeley and the surrounding neighborhoods may interact as equals with the children from the Center. Early exposure to positive role models, he believes, may change the expectations children have for their own lives. Child-centered activities also provide a chance for reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships to develop between members of these often-estranged communities.

McDonald also has found it challenging to negotiate the right relationship between staff, children, and parents when custodial or marital issues arise. Sometimes it is unclear, for instance, whether a father has the legal right to see his child; on the other hand, the Center does not wish to interrupt contact between fathers and children. The legal and institutional status of "*de facto* fathers" (men who fulfill fathering roles but have no legal standing as a guardian or parent) is another source of concern and difficulty. As a licensed child care center, it is not always clear how to reconcile the legal requirement that only parents and guardians gain access to a child when another male is clearly serving in the role of father.

Although there is no verifiable statistic on the current number of fatherhood programs in existence, it is estimated that perhaps as many as 2,000 are currently in operation.[3] In addition, no systematic study of fathering programs has been undertaken to identify the breadth and scope of their work, the preparation of practitioners, the issues practitioners face, or the participants engaged in programs. In the absence of such data, fathering and family specialists have relied heavily on practitioners' reports of the issues faced by fathers in their programs—programs that are often typecast as serving poor, unwed, minority men who shirk their responsibilities to their children. Both data from emerging research such as fragile families and child well-being studies (e.g., Reichman, Garfinkel, McLanahan, and Teitler, 2000) and work with young, urban fathers (e.g., Anderson, 1999; Wilson, 1996; Gadsden, Wortham, Pinderhughes, and Ray, 2000) provide diverse and expansive images of the varied nature of the populations served in fatherhood programs. These studies suggest that there is a fair amount of negotiation surrounding roles and responsibilities that is reliant, in large part, on relationships in the extended family.

Other reports reinforce this sense of a highly variegated field in which research and practice must intersect in meaningful ways. For example, Burt Barnow and his co-authors of the Lewin Group 1997 study *An Evaluability Assessment of Responsible Fatherhood Programs* (commissioned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and by the Ford Foundation) conclude that before the fatherhood field can be assessed—or before individual fatherhood programs are ready to be measured according to outcomes—the following steps are necessary:

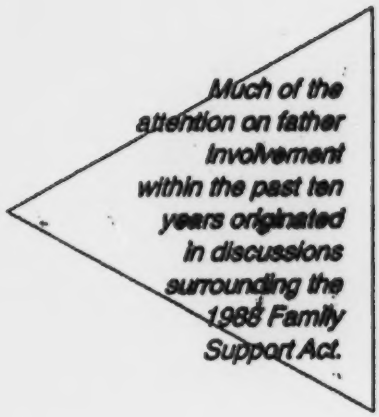
1. Develop a core definition of what constitutes a responsible fatherhood program;
2. Conduct process evaluations, in which programs first define their objectives and activities, along with identifying best practices; and
3. Build basic Management Information System (MIS) capacity to track a client's progress throughout a program and activity after leaving the program.

Programs that serve fathers represent natural settings for examining changes in positive fathering behaviors. In focus groups with practitioners in both 1994 and 1997, NCOFF was motivated by the need to draw on the knowledge of practitioners in order to identify the areas of research that should be pursued (Kane, Gadsden, and Armorer, 1997). Practitioners, after all, had worked with fathers—and often with mothers and children—over time. We believed they represented one of the best barometers for gauging both the ability and progress of the field to become rooted and continue to grow. At this point in the field's short history, it is imperative to examine the programs that provide this support. We must continue to highlight the knowledge of practitioners and the variability of their experiences in diverse settings with diverse populations of men, whose presence in programs denotes a convergence of multiple expectations, needs, and perceptions of the role of men as fathers.

We must continue to highlight the knowledge of practitioners and the variability of their experiences in diverse settings with diverse populations of men.

Supporting Fathers and Families in the Evolving Policy Context

Much of the attention over the past ten years on father involvement originated in discussions surrounding the 1988 Family Support Act. The Act focused both on noncustodial, nonresidential fathers who were absent as a result of divorce or separation and on men who had the ability to pay child support but did not. Subsequent policy initiatives, however, have addressed low-income fathers, particularly those who do not have custody of their children or live with them. Considerable attention given to a subgroup of this population—never-married, low-income young fathers—has led to substantial discussion of a range of issues, from their ability to provide child support to the related issue of paternity establishment.


Much of the attention on father involvement within the past ten years originated in discussions surrounding the 1988 Family Support Act.

Although the issues and initiatives surrounding responsible fathering are not without their controversies, the topic has amassed considerable bipartisan support at all levels of government. Like research and practice, the current emphasis on the role and impact of fathers in families stands in stark contrast to the period prior to the 1990s, when government-funded programs focused almost exclusively on the needs of mothers and children. Since the early 1990s, however, a groundswell of activities by federal and state governments has thrust the issues of father involvement, child welfare, and family support into the public sphere among a wide range of stakeholders.

The significance of fatherhood as a national issue has been grounded in federal initiatives focusing on father involvement, beginning with President Clinton's 1995 executive order to promote responsive federal government efforts that strengthen the role of fathers in families. The President's memorandum directed all federal agencies and executive offices to ensure that relevant policies and programs meaningfully engage fathers; modify relevant programs for women and children to include and strengthen father involvement; measure the success of appropriate programs in part by how effectively they involve fathers with their families and children; and incorporate fathers in appropriate government-initiated research on families and children.

At the same time, activities at the state level were growing both in number and substance. In 1996, the number of states with at least one identifiable state fatherhood activity, conference, or initiative numbered only 12. By 2000, all 50 states had implemented at least one initiative or core of effort. These state activities were reinforced by heightened concern about poor families, the impact of welfare reform, and a growing awareness of policies for workforce development. Using surveys that examined topics such as child support and child neglect as their yardstick of need, governors and various state government agencies began tackling the issues of responsible fatherhood. Their initial efforts ranged from local advertising campaigns to services integration, particularly around health and family services, labor, housing, and criminal and juvenile justice.

In states such as Massachusetts and Indiana, for example, governors and state agencies became engaged in deliberate activities to increase understanding among state employees of the importance of father involvement and to provide systematic support to children and families. In other states, such as Florida, commissions on responsible fatherhood were established by the legislature. In Connecticut, the efforts focused more directly on integrating isolated and disparate services to families, including an emphasis on families in low-income housing. California instituted several innovative demonstration projects and in 1999 appropriated $12.1 million for the Noncustodial Parent Employment and Training Demonstration Project.[4]

Despite the development of independent initiatives within states, most state-level activity around fatherhood has been linked to the devolution of welfare programs and related activities. In 1997, for example, President Clinton and U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Alexis Herman announced that the Department would award $186 million to 49 grantees in 34 states to develop innovative projects serving welfare recipients who were hardest-to-employ. The programs would help recipients acquire the skills, work experience, and resources they needed to find and keep good jobs. Among the initiatives funded were a number focusing on noncustodial fathers. These programs were intended to provide skills training and jobs to help fathers support their children and build a stronger future for them. At the same time, the 1997 Budget Reconciliation Act allocated $2.2 billion noncompetitively during the same two-year period to states, based on the population of poor citizens and adult recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) money. Programs such as TANF converged with new initiatives on fatherhood, subsequently connecting the once-isolated issues of father absence, child support, and family and child welfare (Nightingale, Trutko, and Barnow, 2000).

Although state activities on fatherhood have increased, state agencies by and large remain unfamiliar with fatherhood efforts "on the ground" or with strategies to reduce problems and redundancy in the social services systems intended to engage fathers in support of their children. While these programs could serve as an obvious point of departure for launching coherent and coordinated fatherhood initiatives, many states remain disconnected from programmatic efforts at the local level. There is no paucity of reasons, which include: the traditional divide between policy and practice; the distrust of participants in some community-based programs of child support and paternity establishment systems; the perceptions among some agencies that a focus on fathers means a reduction of effort for children and mothers; and the problems faced by these agencies regarding where and how to respond to requirements and expectations around increased father involvement.

While local fatherhood programs could serve as an obvious point of departure for launching coherent and coordinated fatherhood initiatives, many states remain disconnected from programmatic efforts at the local level.

It comes as no surprise to many that, in a still-emerging field, information on the nature and range of fathering resources is not necessarily known or easily accessible. It is also understandable that, in an area in which father absence had become the norm, policymakers would find the new demand for integrating child welfare, family support, and father involvement too complex to conceptualize or implement. Beyond the problems inherent in identifying noncustodial and nonresidential fathers—in addition to the often negative interactions around collecting child support—most states and state policymakers know little about how to identify and engage fathers. Thus, states often look to, if not rely upon, counties and the municipalities within them to implement efforts and build connections between and among activities focused on child welfare, family support, and father involvement.

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Gardner Children's Center, Inc.

The Gardner Children's Center serves children from the "other side" of Silicon Valley—the San Jose of immigrants, wage laborers, and nine-to-fivers who have not become "dot.com" millionaires. Primarily serving low-income families, Gardner Children's Center attempts to break the cycle of poverty by assisting working parents while providing their children with educational services. As the director, Fred Ferrer, puts it, the Center is "trying help *two* generations get by."

Working closely with the neighborhood's public elementary school, the Center serves children between the ages of two and ten. Over the last few years, it has come to see male involvement not simply as a critical component to the success of children but also as a critical behavior to be modeled and practiced in the presence of the children.

Consistent with its goal of greater male involvement, the Center is committed to helping fathers—regardless of their custody or paternity status (within the limitations of law and custody arrangements)—gain access to their children in the context of childcare and schooling. To pursue this goal, the Center ensures that its activities and environment are welcoming to fathers. For example, because many of their children have Spanish-speaking fathers, all Center events are bilingual. As Ferrer notes, establishing comfort for fathers in a childcare environment must start by eliminating language and cultural barriers. He says the first goal is to get men "to at least show up," and notes that the Center is struggling—like many male involvement programs—to engage men in more substantial interactions with the school and the child. However, institutional barriers are not the only reason for low father involvement in childcare and child rearing. Marital and custody difficulties often create barriers to father participation that originate with custodial mothers, who may exclude fathers from all contact with their children in the school or childcare setting. The Center attempts to address these barriers directly through educational efforts and informal mediation. The goal is to reduce mother resistance to father involvement, increasing the likelihood that fathers will choose to attend events and become more involved with their children. Above all, the Center recognizes that bonds between the child and both mother *and* father are critical and must be supported.

The Center works to promote male involvement in childcare by consistently demonstrating to children that men and women can and do work cooperatively to care for them. To support this effort, the Center works to identify and recruit male staff members, so that the ratio of male and female caregivers stays balanced. Silicon Valley's high-salary, high-tech sector often makes this effort difficult, but the Center recruits male volunteers from San Jose State University and Santa Clara State University to even out its staff. Every event has male staff involved, and no event is "mother-only." As Ferrer reports, "It simply becomes assumed that when activities happen here, men and women, mothers and fathers will both fully participate." For children from difficult family environments, the Center may be the only place where cooperative male-female interactions may be observed and modeled.

CHAPTER 1
SURVEYING THE FIELD AND SETTING THE CONTEXT

Growth in fatherhood programs is linked to the onset of welfare reform, the need for a systematic approach to child support collection, and the increased understanding of issues faced by nonresidential, noncustodial fathers.

Counties and municipalities differ from states in many important ways. County-level policymakers are advantaged by the close physical proximity that exists between agencies and programs, a proximity that provides greater opportunities for identifying fathering programs and practitioners and for determining effective ways of engaging fathers. On the other hand, county and municipal agencies can be equally limited in their knowledge of the issues or programs intended to increase father involvement. To understand the structure and operation of fathering programs at the county level and to determine the degree of county agency involvement in programs in the San Francisco Bay Area, NCOFF launched the BAyFIDS project, with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and assistance by SRI International and the University of California-Berkeley. BAyFIDS, we expected, would provide baseline data on participant needs and program or agency capabilities. It would also capture the attitudes and values held by program participants, program staff, and government agencies about supporting men in their roles as fathers, reducing father absence, and enhancing the welfare of children and families, particularly those facing hardship.

From the outset, NCOFF recognized that BAyFIDS presented a rare opportunity to create and organize a body of information that focused on programs within a single geographic region, with a diverse population of families, with considerable state support, and with an unknown number of active initiatives dispersed throughout the area. We suspected that, as in other parts of the country, programs in California were proliferating. Their growth was linked to the onset of welfare reform, the need for a systematic yet thoughtful approach to child support collection, and the increased understanding of issues faced by nonresidential, noncustodial fathers in divorced and separated families and those in which a birth resulted from nonmarital relationships. Although fathers in all of these categories were likely to be absent from their children's lives, the system around child support—particularly efforts resulting from the 1988 Family Support Act—

tended to overlook fathers who had not claimed paternity and children born outside of marriage.

Our prior work with fathering programs throughout the country and our conversations with practitioners and policymakers in local areas led us to believe that, as with many new efforts, fatherhood programs were still poorly defined and their goals still in a state of flux. We became aware of two realities. First, there is little information about the number or quality of existing programs or about the participants themselves, who typically are low-income men living in urban settings, disproportionately are African American and Latino, are often never-married or unmarried to the mother of the focal child, and are only intermittently engaged in their children's lives. Reports from large demonstration projects such as Parents Fair Share (1998; also see Doolittle and Lynn, 1998) and from Public/Private Ventures (see Achatz and MacAllum, 1994) provide some of the best evidence on noncustodial, nonresidential fathers. However, while both demonstrations worked with programs to identify participants and monitor change, neither focused systematically on the nature of programs themselves or the practice of service providers.

Second, there is still relatively little knowledge among policymakers and social services or educational agencies about the content of existing programs, which reduces the likelihood that coherent and meaningful agendas around child well-being, family support, and father involvement will be established. A lack of knowledge on the part of municipal and county agencies can prevent services from becoming integrated and inhibit the sustainability of programs, particularly small initiatives that do not receive government support.

The Municipal and Regional Context

Unlike other studies focused on well-developed and well-defined fields and constituencies, the BAyFIDS project had groundwork to pursue. Our first step required seeking out and cataloguing existing programs. Then, we conducted analyses on the status of child welfare and family support in the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa

Dr. William Cobb Child Development Center

The Dr. William Cobb Child Development Center (Cobb CDC) is located in a neighborhood school in San Francisco. Its fathering effort, like many others, began with a parenting focus that included mothers and fathers. Over time, the parenting group, which was organized and operated by the community center, had become almost exclusively comprised of mothers. Henry Hitz, director of parenting and father involvement activities at Cobb CDC until 1999, sought out ways to generate father involvement. After a conversation with Ethel and Stanley Selderman, the couple largely responsible for creating the Bay Area Male Involvement Network (BAMIN), Hitz began developing a new group centered around a monthly breakfast for men. Later, this group began to include father-child activities through a grant from the Hewlett Foundation. The goal was to create an environment in which fathers and children could interact and fathers could develop their roles effectively.

Through working with this group, Hitz found that fathers want to be involved with their children's education and be better fathers for their children than their own fathers were for them. However, they also often feel alienated from their children's schooling and powerless to become involved in their children's education. The reasons Hitz cites for these perceptions are complex. Many fathers are intimidated by schools, either because they experienced failure in their own school years or lack the language skills needed to be effective advocates for their children. Others lack the time and financial resources to become more involved. Hitz also believes that deeply ingrained attitudes among teachers, school administrators, and childcare professionals help to discourage father involvement. In his experience, teachers often have negative attitudes about all parents—who are sometimes viewed as a "burden" or "disruption" in the instructional day—but view noncustodial fathers and "*de facto* fathers" (men who fulfill fathering roles but have no legal standing as a guardian or parent) especially negatively. Noncustodial fathers and *de facto* fathers are usually barred from entering the building, much less exercising a voice in educational decisions. Schools often undercut the very parental involvement they seek by treating fathers from nontraditional family structures as nuisances to be excluded.

Having identified an institutional problem, Hitz began to work on promoting male involvement from a different angle: by changing the attitudes of teachers and childcare professionals through training workshops and seminars. His approach was to help teachers and childcare professionals to identify the stereotypes they use to evaluate the intentions of men seeking a voice in their children's education. He also worked with them to identify how these stereotypes become translated into practices and policies within their classrooms, day rooms, and schools. Hitz views the training and educational function of fatherhood programs as a crucial next step in promoting male involvement in schools and childcare.

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There is still relatively little knowledge among policymakers and agencies about the content of existing programs, which reduces the likelihood that coherent and meaningful agendas around child well-being, family support, and father involvement will be established.

Clara, Solano, and Sonoma. We paid particular attention to demographic changes in the Bay Area, including the number of mother-headed households, poverty rates, families affected by welfare reform, and child welfare statistics. We then conducted telephone and mail surveys with program staff, coupled with case studies in selected sites where we interviewed staff members and program participants. We subsequently conducted telephone interviews with identified staff members from county departments of social and family services, education, and the court system.

From the data collected, we created a directory of programs and a database of activity designed to identify services and issues for programs and policymakers and to deepen our understanding of the programs' potential to sustain themselves, effect change, and contribute to the stability of children, families, and communities. Although our research was focused on local agencies and programs in the San Francisco Bay Area, we knew it had the potential to inform county and municipal policies and initiatives across the nation. We anticipated that the project would enhance our knowledge of local programs—their objectives, service populations, practices, strengths, and challenges—and offer insights, as detailed in this report, to the enduring questions regarding the mechanisms that affect the lives of participating fathers, their children and families, and their communities.

Why Focus on County Programs and Policies? The evolving public discussion of fathers and families tends to share several features. First, these conversations typically take place at federal and state levels, and little work focuses on efforts at county or municipal levels or within diverse communities. Second, despite efforts to integrate the issue into existing family and child welfare agendas, activities to promote responsible fatherhood are typically appended to, rather than integrated into, government agendas (beyond child support enforcement) that intend to ensure children's health, safety, and well-being. There is little effort to chronicle whether and how fatherhood-based initiatives—which usually are developed at the state level—are being realized on the ground at county and municipal levels, what degree of success they are achieving, and what forms of service delivery they provide.

In addition, county and municipal efforts within social service agencies, school systems, or court systems have little knowledge of the number, purpose, or scope of fatherhood programs operating within their jurisdictions and therefore the potential for these programs to strengthen other forms of family support. Although a critical part of the discussion focuses on the use of community-based programs to increase fathers' involvement, little is known about the number, coherence, and viability of these programs. Also unknown is the impact of fathers' participation in these programs on their children and of the program itself on broader community efforts.

Although indicators of fathering practices and behaviors have only recently been developed, evaluation studies conducted as a part of program monitoring and assessment suggest that they *can* have a salutary effect on

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the quality of fathering, the cohesiveness and "strength" of families, and positive outcomes for children.[5] However, few studies have attempted to address directly these common but under-explored dimensions. Instead, as is true in most emerging fields, initial data collection efforts have catalogued existing activities for children and fathers by state. For example, The Annie E. Casey Foundation's project *KIDS COUNT* in 1995 served as the first effort to collect these data, which provided state profiles on fathers and families and the status of children's well-being.[6]

Since the advent of *KIDS COUNT*, related publications have focused on state-level activity. For example, the National Center for Children in Poverty's *Map and Track: State Initiatives to Encourage Responsible Fatherhood* (1997, 1999) provides state-by-state profiles, including descriptions of state-level activities around fathers and families and the insertion of these activities into child-serving efforts. Other reports (for example, the Lewin Group's 1997 *Evaluability* study) have informed us about the nature and viability of selected programs.

Although sparse, the work completed to date has shed light on the status of the field and does suggest possibilities for intervention when fathers and families are in distress. However, no study adequately answers questions that link the relevant dimensions of improving fathering within a diverse population to improved outcomes for their children. For example, we do not have strong evidence regarding the type of programmatic intervention that is likely to work best for fathers returning to families from incarceration. Nor do we know which interventions to recommend when the goal is to help improve a specific child outcome, such as persistence in school. For most permutations of these dimensions, the research community has few answers to offer. The activities of the BAyFIDS Project are intended to provide researchers and practitioners with the data necessary to inform such choices at the local level. We believe the field urgently needs this type of data and guidance.

Why Focus on the San Francisco Bay Area? California and the Bay Area possess unique features that make this region an appropriate focus of our study on fathers and families programs and their relationships to county fatherhood initiatives. Just as the fathering programs in the Bay Area are evolving, California as a state has been described as a "work in progress" (Baldassare, 2000). Like most states, it divides responsibility for child support and services to fathers among a variety of state departments, county offices, and local agencies. Although stable for many years, the system has recently undergone a major revolution with the creation of the California Department of Child Support Services (CDSS) on January 1, 2000. (See Appendix A for a review of the role that major social service systems in California serve in supporting children and fathers.)

California is the most populated state in the nation, with a census count indicating a citizenry of more than 33 million. Demographic projections for population growth over the next few decades are as high as 50 million. An increase in the size of the population is occurring in con-

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The evolving discussion of fathers and families typically takes place at the federal and state levels. Little work focuses on efforts at the county or municipal levels or within diverse communities.

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California and the Bay Area possess unique features that make this region an appropriate focus of our study on fathers and families programs and their relationships to county fatherhood initiatives.

junction with an increase in diversity as well. The rise in the number of nonwhite citizens and those emigrating from outside the United States—coupled with growing income inequality and relative uncertainty about sectors of the state's economy—make California a compelling case to compare with other regions in the nation, particularly those with large urban and metropolitan areas. Accordingly, California's challenges represent concerns shared by other states, such as transportation, public schools, and higher education. In many ways, the conditions in California appear to make these problems more severe in this state than in others; and, compared to other states, California ranks considerably lower in spending in these areas: 48th on highways, 37th on higher education, and 31st on public school spending (Baldassare, 2000).

The San Francisco Bay Area, in Northern California, is an especially unique region within California. The nine counties of the Bay Area account for 20 percent of the state's population and include almost 100 suburban locales. The region is home to Silicon Valley and many counties with the highest incomes in the state and most expensive housing in the nation. It contains the most adults with college degrees (49 percent), almost one-half of whom are likely to earn $60,000 or more annually. Approximately 30 percent of the region's residents are 35 years old or younger, and about 66 percent own a house. The area's population is diverse—a diversity that varies by county and within counties. For example, San Francisco continues

Figure 1
Summary of Labor Data in Nine San Francisco Bay Area Counties

County	Total CalWORKs 1999	Adult CalWORKs 1999	Child CalWORKs 1999	Food Stamps 1999	Total Population[1]
Alameda[3]	70,756	19,450	51,306	68,964	1,279,182
Contra Costa[4]	31,275	8,539	22,736	29,222	803,732
Marin	2,466	728	1,738	31,246	230,096
Napa	1,715	454	1,261	2,237	110,765
San Francisco	23,538	7.354	16,184	24,127	723,959
San Mateo	5,693	1,085	4,608	5,571	649,623
Santa Clara[5]	41,430	10,840	30,590	39,566	1,497,577
Solano	17,258	5,068	12,190	18,847	340,421
Sonoma	8,460	2,211	6,249	9,197	388,222

[1] 1990 U.S. Census, U.S. Census Bureau tabulations.
[2] Of the total disadvantaged population in each county, the number or percentage of 16- to 21-year olds who have dropped out of high s
[3] Oakland City is included as part of Alameda County in composite statistics.
[4] Richmond City is included as part of Contra Costa County in composite statistics.
[5] The North Santa Clara Consortium is included as part of Santa Clara County in composite statistics.

to be a racially diverse setting; Marin County is a largely white suburb with little growth; and Contra Costa and Silicon Valley are growing, predominantly white suburbs.

Despite the concentration of wealth in this region, other demographic data imply that many Bay Area fathers and families are in need of high-quality support services (Figure 1). For example, the *KIDS COUNT* data show that, in California, 13.6 percent of children in 1995 lived in households with no adult male and 32.6 percent of all men between the ages of 25 and 34 earned less than the poverty level for a family of four. In 1999, five counties had California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) counts of 17,000 people or more: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano. Four of these counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and Solano) also have the highest percentage of families in poverty. We cannot know how many fathers need or seek services, but we do know that poverty, use of welfare support systems, and separation of the father from his family are related to decreases in fathering efficacy. If, as our BAyFIDS work leads us to believe, there are too few resources available to serve this population, it is extremely important to deploy those that are at hand in the most efficacious manner possible. Because current research provides us with only limited guidance, we designed the BAyFIDS project to help inform such efforts.

Percent Total Families In Poverty	Total Disadvantaged Population[1]	Total Unemployed January 2000	Unemployment Rate January 2000	Number Not In Labor Force January 2000	Number of Disadvantaged Dropouts 16-21[1,2]	Percent of Disadvantaged Dropouts 16-21[1,2]
7.6	92,388	25,820	3.5	385,452	2,656	19.7
5.4	40,477	19,331	3.1	213,461	1,714	26.0
3.0	14,157	2,700	2.0	66,692	411	25.0
4.6	6,307	2,134	3.4	35,462	291	31.0
9.7	68,684	13,212	3.1	251,816	1,445	18.9
4.3	32,059	8,116	2.0	179,567	1,153	22.1
4.8	79,132	30,539	3.2	371,902	3,312	26.4
6.0	22,564	8,951	4.8	89,605	721	22.5
5.2	21,543	7,001	2.8	90,096	841	25.7

CHAPTER 2
THE BAYFIDS APPROACH: BUILDING THE FATHER PROGRAM DATASET

With the emergence of fathers and families as an important area of research, practice, and policy, questions are increasingly being raised about the form, function, and feasibility of programs providing support to men in their roles as fathers and family members. A multi-year study to track, document, and analyze the operation and impact of fathering programs, the BAyFIDS project was designed to address these basic questions. This report summarizes findings from the first phase of the BAyFIDS Project: the characteristics of programs, participants, and county relationships, as well as where the fathers and families effort might lead.

The purpose of this project is to deepen the field's knowledge of fathers and families programs and their potential for contributing to integrated activities that support children and families. Longer-term pursuits are to collect program information; chart service and activity change over time; and relate fathering, family, and child welfare outcomes to program variables. The project is intended to produce two broad outcomes. First, it was designed to provide local intervention activities with new knowledge and promote county-level partnerships among regional stakeholders by disseminating information on fathering services in the San Francisco Bay Area and fostering cooperation between public sector agencies and private sector service providers with an interest in fathers, children, families, and communities. Second, it has emphasized the expansion of knowledge in the fatherhood field, both within and outside the Bay Area. Because the region is broadly representative of the state of California and the United States as a whole, studying programs in the nine-county region allows us to develop and extend the field's knowledge of programs and their relationship to father, family, and community outcomes.

What are fathering programs? Where are they located? What services do they offer? Are they only offered to fathers, or do they include men who support children's development? As the interest in fatherhood initiatives increases, is attention to mothers and children decreasing?

To realize these outcomes, NCOFF developed two distinct tools. The first is a comprehensive, regularly updated directory of fathering programs for individuals, agencies, organizations, and governments within the nine counties. The *Bay Area Fathering Programs Directory* is intended to serve as a catalogue of organizations that address fathering issues, broadly defined.

In addition to offering contact and referral information, the Directory also includes data on the primary and secondary populations served, the duration of programs, and the services offered. The Directory is currently accessible through the World Wide Web (www.bayfids.org) and is available in paper form from NCOFF.

The second tool was intended to improve coordination between local fathering support efforts and county government through the creation of a database that allows us to build profiles of programs, monitor change in them, and contribute to their sustainability. The *Father Programs Dataset* (FPD) contains information on program and participant characteristics; program services and problems; programs' relationships with county agencies; and measures of county officials' knowledge about efforts in their region, as well as their engagement with those efforts. This report contains the findings from an analysis of data in the FPD.

We developed an assessment of fathering issues in the Bay Area through: a review of reports examining poverty rates, single mother households, and child and family welfare in the Bay Area; conversations with contacts in the region; and direct observation of programs both in the Bay Area and throughout the country.

Based on the information provided by these sources, we arrived at a data collection strategy that hinged on three premises. First, it was clear that no one group of stakeholders would be able to provide us with the data we required to study both fathering programs and the policies that supported them. Instead, we needed to gather information from all three groups of principal stakeholders: program directors and staff, program participants, and county/municipal policymakers. Second, since it was clear that no one group could act as a principal informant, it was also evident that we had to match our data collection methods to the needs and preferences of each stakeholder group. Finally, because little work exists on the issues we wished to study, it was imperative that we use multiple data collection methods and multiple stakeholder perspectives.

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In all, three different data collection strategies were employed: a mail and a telephone survey for program staff; site visits and focus groups with program staff and selected participants; and semi-structured telephone interviews with county-level staff in social and family services, public educational institutions, and the court system.

With the emergence of fathers and families as an important area of research, practice, and policy, questions are increasingly being raised about the form, function, and feasibility of programs.

Surveys of Programs

Two surveys of Bay Area fathering programs were used to gather information on programs and participants. The goal was to collect data from program directors about their programmatic efforts, program participants, and the program's relationship to public agencies and fathering efforts. The survey included both a mail and a telephone survey. To ensure that both instruments were sensitive to language and usage concerns in the field, both were field-tested with practitioners, located in sites similar to those in the Bay Area and drawn from the National Practitioners Network

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Table 1
BAyFIDS Practitioner-Liaisons

Coordinator: Stanley Seiderman of San Anselmo Preschool Center

County	Practitioner-Liaison	Program
Alameda	Newt McDonald	Ephesians Child Development Center
Contra Costa	Elizabeth London	Therapeutic Nursery School
Marin	Ray Capper	Marin Community Development Program
Napa	Artemisa Medina	Los Ninos Child Care Center
Santa Clara	Fred Ferrer	Gardner Children's Center
San Francisco	Sally Large	Friends of St. Francis
San Mateo	Mauricio Palma	Bay Area Male Involvement Network (BAMIN)
Solano	Tony Glavis	Napa-Solano Head Start
Sonoma	Robin Bowen	California Parenting Institute

for Fathers and Families. (See Appendix B for the final mail survey instrument.) The surveys were the primary source of information for both the BAyFIDS Directory and Father Program Dataset. Because we were tasked with developing a comprehensive directory, the goal of our data collection methods was not to create a statistically valid sample but to conduct a census of every program in the Bay Area.

Programmatic efforts in the Bay Area, we soon learned, have evolved in a variety of settings and for a range of purposes. Some were distinctly developed in order to respond to an immediate need for children, parents, or families. Some programs had been organized and formally sanctioned by parent organizations or governmental agencies—through registration as a nonprofit organization, for instance—while others have operated informally in churches, homes, and similar grassroots venues. Programs tend to have a high mortality rate in the early years of development; some were listed in the telephone directory one day, but their doors were closed the next. However, the most daunting prospect we faced was to define what actually constituted or could be considered a "fathering program." On several occasions, field-level practitioners' descriptions of their programs were consistent with definitions that the BAyFIDS staff had developed for fathering programs, but the programs would often decline to participate because their contact person did not want to define or describe the program as such.

Given the variety of effort and lack of consensus regarding definitions, the BAyFIDS project used a broad set of criteria to determine program eligibility in order to identify the greatest range of organizations possible. We included any organization that involved men or boys in a program relating to parenting, pregnancy prevention, or male roles as fathers and parents/caregivers for children. We arrived at the final set of programs listed in the Directory through a five-stage process.

First, we identified resources on father involvement programs and activities and met and talked with our existing program contacts within and

outside the Bay Area. Those partners included individuals at the Claremont Institute; the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership; the Bay Area Male Involvement Network (BAMIN); community foundations; social services and educational agencies in the Bay Area; Head Start programs; and churches, schools, and community centers.

Second, we identified and contacted practitioners within each county—one per county—to serve as liaisons for the project and to assist us in identifying programs, reaching practitioners, and providing information to practitioners in their vicinity who wanted to know about our work. Such liaisons, we believed, were crucial not only to help identify programs but also to contribute to our strategies for conducting data analysis and discussions with county and municipal policymakers. With the assistance of Stanley Seiderman of BAMIN, a longtime supporter of NCOFF, we were able to establish a network of practitioner-liaisons for the project (Table 1).

Third, we collapsed information from the lists provided by Bay Area practitioners with information from several other sources—e.g., NCOFF's existing programs database, Head Start programs and other early childhood programs, school systems, and social service agencies—which we contacted initially either by telephone or mail. Collectively, these sources yielded the names of 319 potential programs.

Fourth, we attempted to contact (or recontact) all 319 potential programs by telephone. Of this initial set, 38 could not be contacted by telephone or mail, 125 did not offer relevant services, and two ceased operation between initial and follow-up contact. The revised list consisted of 154 potential programs located across the nine Bay Area counties, as displayed in Table 2.

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In the final stage, we contacted all 154 potential programs by telephone and mail to collect data for the Directory and other aspects of the BAyFIDS research project. Eighty-four programs (54 percent) provided at least basic contact information; of these, 48 completed and returned the detailed mail survey (for this reason, information on 48 of the programs is more complete). After a more in-depth telephone interview, we determined that approximately one-quarter of the programs did not offer relevant services. The remaining 25 percent were not responsive after multiple telephone calls and mailings.

Table 2
Potential Program Distribution by County

County	Potential Programs
Alameda	33
Contra Costa	16
Marin	10
Napa	7
San Francisco	33
San Mateo	22
Santa Clara	9
Solano	7
Sonoma	17
Total Potential Programs	154

Site Visits

Survey research is well-suited for capturing snapshots of average conditions but is less effective at unearthing underlying processes or gathering information beyond researcher-imposed categorizations. Because this field is rapidly evolving and thinly investigated, we felt it was critical to interview

It was critical to interview program directors, staff members, and program participants to understand better how programs operate, what goals they pursue and why, and what both program staff and participants hope to achieve.

program directors, staff members, and program participants directly in order to understand better how programs operate, what goals they pursue and why, and what both program staff and participants hope to achieve. We also felt that program participants and staff members would be more receptive to in-person interviews than to impersonal surveys.

Accordingly, we completed five in-person site visits with program staff and two focus groups with participants and paricipants/coordinators.[7] The focus groups addressed the range of issues that fathering leaders experience in their programs, the specific social and policy barriers to father involvement, and the nature of the problem in the Bay Area. The focus groups (composed of fathers only) lasted for approximately two hours and addressed three questions:

1. What do you view as your primary role in raising your children?
2. What are the barriers to fulfilling your role as a father?
3. How does the program you joined help you better fulfill your fathering role?

Site visits to programs lasted approximately two to four hours. Some sites invited the participation of staff from referral agencies who had been active in supporting their work. Program directors and staff responded to questions along six broad themes:

1. Why did you or your parent organization decide to develop a fathering/male involvement/pregnancy prevention program?
2. What motivates men to join your program?
3. What services and activities tend to keep men involved in your program?
4. What are the major issues that men bring to the program for resolution?
5. What are the major barriers to men participating in your program?
6. How does your organization work with federal, state, county, or municipal agencies addressing these issues?

County Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted with 26 county-level agencies, 17 of which were in-depth interviews. Our goal was to contact one or more high-level representatives of each county education office, District Attorney's (DA) office, family services division of the DA's office, and the health and social services offices. From each office, we sought information on four broad areas related to support of fathers and families:

1. The scope, nature, and intensity of any agency-sponsored fathering initiatives;
2. The degree of agency and/or county-level political commitment to these initiatives;
3. The agency's general sense of the relationship between fatherhood initiatives and other child welfare or family-focused initiatives or responsibilities; and

4. The willingness of agencies to cooperate with one another and with community-based organizations on fathering and family issues, especially in the context of sharing child welfare data.

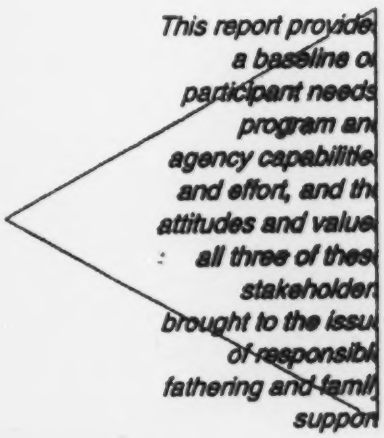
In part, we wished to see what the three focal agencies knew about fathering activities in their regions, how they addressed father involvement in their work, and how they viewed the role of fathers in mandated and optional activities. Our initial contacts were superintendents of education, directors of social services agencies, and district attorneys. These contacts often referred us to those within their organizations who, from their perspective, were more qualified to answer the interview questions. In Napa County, for example, we initially contacted the Superintendent of Education but were referred to a program specialist within the county's office of education who works with teen fathers to prevent violence and promote responsible fatherhood. Several other contacts referred us to designated staff within the agency, also indicating that these individuals had greater expertise and knowledge about fathering efforts within the county.

The Phase I Report

Our intention in this report is to provide a baseline on participant needs, program and agency capabilities and effort, and the attitudes and values all three stakeholders brought to the issue of responsible fathering and family support. This information comes with a range of complexities, not limited to any single set of issues, problems, or needs.

Throughout the report, we point out some of these complexities, focusing on how our "raw" empirical findings are at variance with the expectations and beliefs of practitioners, as expressed both in responses to the surveys and in our interviews during our site visits. We also discuss how some findings may be related to known issues of participant needs and expectations, as revealed in the relationships and disparities between participant needs and expectations and provider capabilities, values, goals, and expectations.

Specifically, in Chapter 3, we present our findings on the characteristics and needs of program participants, based upon reported data from program staff. Chapter 4 provides a profile of fatherhood initiatives in the Bay Area, discussing their primary objectives, the services they provide, and the resources they possess. In Chapter 5, we discuss our findings on the role of county and government agencies in emerging fatherhood initiatives across the nine counties in the study. Each of these chapters concludes with a perspective on the findings for either participants, the programs with which they were affiliated, or the government agencies in each county. Finally, Chapter 6 contains a general conclusion that includes our reflections on the findings and recommendations for programs, county agencies, and funders.



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CHAPTER 3
PROFILES IN FATHERING: PARTICIPANTS IN THE BAY AREA

The only rule is that the picture varies for all fathers, who have different cultural histories, different expectations and experiences, different demands, and different dreams and aspirations for themselves and their families.

Our fundamental task was to identify the characteristics and features of men who enter and seek support from programs. Although fatherhood efforts have focused on men from diverse groups and across different social classes, they have been centered on particular subsets of fathers. For instance, responsible fatherhood programs are located disproportionately in urban areas and tend to serve low-income men, who either by divorce or out-of-wedlock relationships have fathered a child and want to re-engage or strengthen their involvement.

Previous work with practitioners and programs in other states, as well as in California but outside the Bay Area, has provided insights about the men who ultimately decide to enter a program. Some have had children who rely on public assistance; others have had children with teenage mothers whose families do not welcome the father's involvement; and still others have children and families who are as likely to thrive as to survive because of limited incomes (Brindis, et. al, 1998; Kane, Gadsden, Armorer, 1997). Fathers may be "technically absent" but provide informal support such as child care, materials, toys, and diapers. They may have completed school or have dropped out. They may be motivated by judicial mandates or by the expectations of family and friends.

The only rule is that the picture varies for each father, making it difficult to know exactly who the "average" father is and what to expect in different contexts with fathers who have different cultural histories, different expectations and experiences, different demands, and different dreams and aspirations for themselves and their families.

Participant Characteristics: Who Attends or Participates in Programs?

Fathering program participants in the Bay Area are disproportionately members of minority communities, with low or no incomes and low educational attainment. In a typical program, nearly 50 percent of the

PROFILE OF FATHER PARTICIPANTS*

Age

16 or Younger:	10.0%
Over 30:	57.5%

Poverty

>80% Below 1999 Poverty Line

Literacy and Numeracy

Read below 6th grade level:	20%

Educational Attainment

Years of schooling:	10%
Without GED or HS Diploma:	60%
Some College:	10%

Employment Status

One full-time job:	51.4%
One part-time job:	15.7%
Unemployed:	37.8%
Involved in the informal economy:	47.0%

Ethnicity

Hispanic:	45%
White:	10%
African American:	10%
Asian American:	5%

Children

1 Child:	45.0%
2 Children:	35.5%
3 or more:	22.5%

Marital Status

Married:	50%
Separated or Divorced:	25%
Never Married:	45%

**Percentages will not add to 100%; Means reported, unless otherwise stated.*

Strengths:

- Desire to become more involved with children and family
- Willingness to learn
- Commitment to program
- Support of children/support of children's mother
- Desire to overcome drug/alcohol addiction
- Desire to obtain a job
- Desire to gain training or education
- Previous experience with parenting

Challenges:

- Inability to read/write at sufficient levels
- Insufficient time for family and child/ children
- Joblessness and poverty
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Lack of support from family and friends
- Need for legal assistance with custody issues
- Lack of knowledge needed to obtain government assistance

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One explanation for participants' impoverished status is their generally low level of educational attainment. Programs reported that, on average, participants completed approximately ten years of schooling.

participants are Hispanic and approximately 10 percent are African American. Another 10 percent are white/Caucasian, with a concentration in Marin, San Mateo, and Sonoma counties. Participation among African Americans is heavier in San Francisco and Contra Costa counties, although there is a substantial African American participation in all but Sonoma, Solano, and Santa Clara counties.

Age. On average, approximately 53 percent of program participants are over the age of 30, another 40 percent are between 17 and 20 years of age, and another 10 percent are 16 years of age or less. However, particular types of programs are likely to attract men from a particular age range. Teen programs attract adolescents; early/young fathers programs attract men between the ages of 16 and 25; and male involvement and fathering programs typically attract men over the age of 25 (although both young fathers and male involvement programs show variety in the age of participants).

Income. Most participants appear to fall in the category of "working poor"—those whose wages fall below the poverty line. On average, over 80 percent of program participants are likely to earn wages below the 1999 federal poverty standard ($15,050 per year). Programs in only two counties, San Mateo and Alameda, reported less than 60 percent of participants earning more than the federal poverty standard. (No data were available for Sonoma County.) On the other hand, programs in four counties—Contra Costa, Napa, San Francisco, and Santa Clara—reported that 95 percent or more of program participants earned less than the federal poverty standard.

Employment and Child Support. Program participants' low economic status is only partially attributable to unemployment. Program reports indicate that a slight majority of participants (51.4 percent) held at least one full-time job; another 15.7 percent held at least one part-time job. Program staff mentioned that they suspect an average of 50 percent of all program participants are engaged in the informal economy (defined here as income-generating activities not related to the sale of illegal substances, such as street peddling, house repairs, car repairs, etc.). This information is particularly relevant to discussions of child support enforcement. Although between 40 and 50 percent of program participants have child support obligations, program staff estimated that only approximately 35 percent of participants with obligations were able to fulfill them on a regular basis.

Education and Poverty. Given the above-average cost of living in the Bay Area, the degree of both absolute and relative impoverishment among participants is probably understated by the federal poverty guidelines. Most participants fall in the bottom 5 to 10 percent of Bay Area residents in terms of income. One explanation for participants' impoverished status is their generally low level of educational attainment. Programs reported that, on average, participants completed approximately ten years of schooling (indicating that most dropped out of school after the ninth or tenth grade). This finding was consistent across the eight counties for which we have data. (No data were available from Solano County). Only Sonoma County

reported that the average program participant had at least some college education. Six of every ten participants in an average program reportedly had no high school diploma or GED. Moreover, programs reported that at least 20 percent of their participants had, in practitioners' estimation, significant problems with reading and basic mathematics.

Participant Strengths. Participants in fatherhood programs are often considered in terms of their needs and less often in terms of their strengths. As a result, programs tend to offer few opportunities and activities that allow the abilities and prior knowledge of participants to contribute to the growth and quality of the programs themselves. With this oversight in mind, we sought to understand not simply the perceived deficits with which fathers enter programs but also their strengths, which are fundamental to their own ability to build and sustain positive relationships with their children, spouses and partners, families, and communities.

How did practitioners view participants' abilities, and to what extent did they use their knowledge of those abilities to develop and implement programs that support fathers? We asked practitioners to review a 14-item list of strengths that participants might bring to their programs. The eight most cited strengths (each nominated by at least one-third of the respondents) were aggregated into three themes. The first is a participant's willingness to transform himself, through learning, training, employment, and treatment of addiction. The second is his commitment to and support of his role as parent. The third is his commitment to the program and the process of change the program offers.

Child, Marital, and Family Relationships. Programs reported that approximately 50 percent of participant fathers live with the mother of one or more of their biological children. On average, 86 percent of married men, 53 percent of separated or divorced men, and 53 percent of never-married men reside with the mother of one or more of their children. About 40 percent of fathers with one child have full custody of that child. Marital status may be linked to the relationship that exists between the father and child (and, although not apparent from these data, between the father and mother in relationship to the child). Similarly, the number and quality of contacts may be equally significant. On average, 23.8 percent of participant fathers had no relationship with their children when they entered the program, while 38.1 percent developed relationships during the program.

Participants are often considered in terms of their needs and less often in terms of their strengths. As a result, there are few opportunities and activities that allow their abilities and prior knowledge to contribute to program growth and quality.

Problems Faced by Fathers. Programs also reported the prevalence of other problems that may be categorized as attitudinal, institutional, and temporal. These problems were cited by at least 30 percent of responding programs, which identified the issue as a prominent challenge for participating fathers. With respect to attitude, programs suggested that the mothers of the fathers' children, the parents and families of both the fathers and mothers, and the fathers' friends often were unsupportive of the men's efforts to become better fathers or to participate in programs.[8] They also

To maintain a minimal standard of living, participants often retain multiple jobs—full-time, part-time, or informal. While this strategy offers a modicum of economic security, it also consumes the most precious commodity most parents have for their children: time.

reported that fathers tend to disassociate procreative activity with a corresponding responsibility for their children; to be unfamiliar with social and governmental institutions, assistance programs, and the family court system; and to lack sufficient time for interaction with their children or participation in the family.

Recognizing that participation often represented a father's own realization of his need for assistance, we also asked programs to select the primary challenges they believed participants faced from a 19-item list. These challenges correspond to the sets of strengths listed earlier. The first set involves barriers to fathers' personal transformation, including poverty, low educational attainment, and substance abuse. The second centers on barriers to fathers fulfilling their parental roles, including limitations on time spent with children and the family, lack of support from family and friends, and lack of counsel on custody issues. The third set includes barriers to fathers' program participation, including time constraints. A fourth issue, difficulty for fathers in accessing government support programs, is an overarching problem.

Perspectives on Participant Findings

Our empirical findings are consistent with what program and participant informants indicated during the site visits. Practitioners agree that participants join programs because they wish to improve the quality of their parenting and interactions with their children. They suggest that the very factors that impinge on their parenting also restrict, if not reduce, their ability to participate in programs and activities that might improve their options. In our estimation, the root cause of these issues may often be traced to low levels of educational attainment, which then have an impact on at least three facets of participants' lives—competing demands on their time, an inability to access resources, and low wages and levels of employment.[9]

Our data suggest that most participants are employed, but still lack the resources to provide for their family's needs—whether they live with the mother and child or must make child support payments. In the effort to maintain a minimal standard of living, participants often retain multiple jobs, whether they are full-time, part-time, or informal. While holding multiple jobs creates a modicum of economic security, it also consumes the most precious commodity most parents have for their children: time. As we reported earlier, the second and third most-often reported challenges for participants was a lack of time for both their children and the program.

Participants are often left with a difficult trade-off. In an effort to improve their parenting skills—which may be technically sound but underutilized—they are asked or decide to put time into fathering or male involvement programs. As we will argue later, these competing goals suggest that programs must offer participants ways to escape the time trap—options for enjoying the benefits of program participation and improving their

economic status while at the same time enjoying quality time with their families.

Second, low levels of educational attainment also affect fathers' abilities to gain access to assistance from available sources. Programs noted that participants often lack the knowledge needed to gain access to government assistance programs. Although we cannot confirm this assertion directly from the data, the prevalence of literacy and numeracy issues within the participant population suggests that these problems may contribute, in large measure, to participants' difficulties. Our perception is supported, in part, by program respondents who told us that almost 50 percent of all participants lacked the reading and writing skills necessary to participate in legal proceedings, and 25 percent lacked the skills necessary to use program materials. These findings suggest that low literacy levels and educational attainment are major inhibitors to participants seeking and gaining effective assistance, even when they can find the time to pursue it.

Third, low educational attainment is a known risk factor for poverty, joblessness, substance abuse, and participation in illicit activities; in turn, poverty and joblessness are known to contribute to both substance abuse and criminal behavior. All four can lead to separation from family and children, and all four may be traced to an inability to read, write, and calculate at a level sufficient to engage in the mainstream economy. Clearly, our data indicate that programs are aware of these problems and the urgency of addressing low levels of literacy and numeracy among participants. Nearly every program nominated low educational attainment as a chief challenge for program participants; most programs were sufficiently familiar with their participants' educational challenges to report data upon request. Nevertheless, as the next section will demonstrate, programs often directly treat only the symptoms of the greater problems they have identified.

Low levels of educational attainment and literacy are major inhibitors to participants seeking and getting effective assistance, even when they can find the time to pursue it.

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CHAPTER 4
PROFILES OF SERVICES: PROGRAMS IN THE BAY AREA

Fathering and male involvement programs represent a recent and emergent form of social support. Few people know what services these programs provide or what should be expected as outcomes of a father's participation. Consider, for example, a hypothetical on-the-street interview that randomly asked passersby about programs serving children and families. Most interviewees probably would be able identify a child- or family-focused program or describe a child care center, a program for expectant mothers, or services for teen parents. However, it is very likely that most could not provide comparable descriptions of fathering and male involvement initiatives or be able to identify any programs. Moreover, many would not expect that such services would be found in traditional family programs. With these misperceptions in mind, the findings in this chapter are organized to reflect the varied conceptions of fathering and male involvement programs, as well as reasons why this definition is not yet settled.

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Program Characteristics: What Types of Programs Provide Services?

Our survey of programs and practitioners yielded a set of baseline statistics on how programs are organized, funded, and sustained, as well as what services they offer to participants.

Organization. As we expected, nonprofit organizations offer the vast majority of programs (almost 80 percent), although their level of formality varies widely. Many were organized under section 501(c)3 of the Federal Tax Code as nonprofit organizations, but a sizable minority represented informal networks and groups. Given recent mandates to expand services to fathers with child support orders, we were surprised to find so few programs organized through government-initiated support. In addition, most programs had been funded at a relatively low level—of the 35 programs that responded to our funding questions, 20 reported having annual budgets of less than $50,000. Another 13 have annual budgets between $50,000 and

PROFILE OF FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS*

Types

Parenting:	66%
Responsive fathering:	50%
Early/teen fathering support:	33%
Teen pregnancy prevention:	33%

Organization

Non-profit:	79.0%
For-profit:	7.4%
Public agency:	7.4%

Retention

Retention rate > 50%:	44%
Programs reporting retention problems:	28.4%

Median Employment

Full-time:	3
Part-time:	4
Volunteers:	6

Recruiting

Past participant world of mouth:	75.0%
Community referral:	66.7%
Nonparticipant word of mouth:	50.0%
Advertising:	47.9%
Mandates:	25.0%
Affiliation with religious group:	6.3%

Years Serving Fathers

Mean:	9.82
Median:	6
Less than 3 years:	25%

Primary Services

(offered by more than 60% of programs)

Peer support groups
Parent education classes
Cooperative parenting classes
Child development education classes
Peer/group learning opportunities

Curriculum

Internally developed:	26%
Purchased:	11%
Developed by others:	7%
Bought/revised internally:	2%

Fwewer than half have a curriculum

Population Founded to Serve

Fathers/men:	18.5%
Mothers:	24.4%
Families:	23.2%
Others:	25.0%

**Percentages will not add to 100%; Means reported, unless otherwise stated.*

Main Objectives:

(mean > 3.0)

- Increase contact between father/child
- Improve parenting skills
- Improve quality of father/child interactions
- Promote father/child bonding
- Involve father in child's basic care
- Decrease prevalence of child abuse
- Increase father participation in child's schooling

Concerns:

- Insufficient funding
- Uncertainty of funding
- Limited participant resources
- Low priority of government

Child-Centered Programs

Roughly 30 percent of the programs we surveyed primarily serve children. Their missions range from providing early childhood education to childcare services. The fathering components of these programs focus on encouraging men to take greater responsibility for their children. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Bayshore Child Care Services	To encourage the involvement of men in the rearing of children through meetings, projects, and events that discuss the importance of men serving in this role; to change attitudes about fathering issues.
Parents Place Fathers Group	To assist preschools in developing programs that are inclusive of fathers and to assist fathers in becoming more positively engaged with their children.

$150,000, while only two programs reported budgets over $250,000 annually.

Funding. On average, programs report that their funding is evenly split between public and private sources. However, in actuality, there is a great deal of variation across programs in the share of public and private funding. For example, of the 35 responding programs, 13 indicated that they receive 80 percent or more of their funding from private sources, while 12 reported receiving 80 percent or more of their funding from public sources. Public funds originate at federal, state, or county departments of health and human services and education. No program reported funding from a local or municipal governmental source, and no funding flowed from federal, state, or county departments of labor and justice—an issue we will address again in the "Perspectives on Program Findings" section later in this chapter.

Length of Existence. On average, programs reported that they began to serve fathers approximately ten years ago—although the median reported "time since first father service" was six years. About one-quarter of all programs began their fathering/male involvement work three or fewer years ago. While most programs were not established solely to serve fathers or men, approximately 18.5 percent of the programs reported they were founded to serve this population directly. Most programs were originally founded to serve families, mothers (including teen and expectant mothers), or others in the family, and subsequently recognized the need to add a fathering or male involvement component to their programming. The most cited reasons for developing a fathering or male involvement component were: the desire to switch from a focus on mothers, children, or teens to a family focus; the realization that men were underserved; direct requests from the community; encouragement from grantors to provide services to fathers; and the work of BAMIN, including its public awareness efforts.

Services Provided. Most organizations described themselves as offering "parenting" or "responsive fathering" programs. Approximately one-third of all programs also offered services targeted for teens. Over 80 percent of responding organizations reported offering two or more types of programs, with the average organization offering at least three types. Organizations tend to offer services in a few distinct and repeated pairings:

- Unwanted fatherhood programs tend also to provide early teen/ fatherhood support (more than 50 percent).

- Programs offering responsive fathering, parenting, and workplace services also tend to provide programs for incarcerated fathers and unwanted fatherhood prevention, as well as divorce support and abusive household support (between 35 and 50 percent).
- Parenting and early/teen fatherhood support programs also tend to provide services for incarcerated fathers and responsive fathering (between 25 and 35 percent).

Staff. In general, the fatherhood programs we studied maintain relatively small overall budgets and staffs. Many programs reported having a median of approximately three full-time and four part-time employees, with about six volunteers. However, the median disguises the great diversity in program employment. Over 50 percent of the programs reported using five or fewer full-time and part-time employees at any given time, while about 25 percent reported using more than 25 employees. When asked about the types of professionals they employ, over 50 percent of the responding programs indicated that they employed no professional of any type. Nearly 25 percent employ one profession al, 12 percent employ two, and only three programs of 48 reported employing more than three professionals. Social workers were the most commonly cited professional employee, with the "other" category ranking second. No program employed professional psychiatrists; five programs employed psychologists; two employed lawyers; and one employed a medical doctor.

Recruitment. Programs reported that most participants are recruited by word of mouth and by community referral. Approximately 25 percent of programs accept mandated referrals from the criminal justice system and family courts. Although there is considerable attention being given to the role of faith-based communities at the state and national levels, very few participants were referred by or affiliated with religious groups. Only three of the 48 responding programs indicated that religious affiliations brought men to the program.

Male Involvement Programs

A majority of the programs we studied considered promoting male involvement as their primary goal. Their intention is to provide men with a continuum of services supporting their development as contributors to families and communities. In the Bay Area, these programs have served leadership roles around fatherhood initiatives. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
BAMIN South Bay	To increase the involvement of fathers and other significant men in the lives of children. This goal is accomplished by working with the 15 sites of network members and assisting them in creating programs. BAMIN establishes criteria for a member site to become a father-friendly organization and works to increase the number of men working in agencies and programs.
Child Care Coordinating Council	To provide technical assistance and advice to males who want to promote male involvement. In general, the Council provides technical assistance to daycare centers and elementary schools. The Council offers scholarships to men who want to attend male involvement conferences.
Dr. William Cobb Child Development Center	To organize fathers and other significant men to become more involved with their children and in particular with their children's education.

Participant persistence in fatherhood programs is reportedly higher than in many other social services initiatives. Forty-four percent of the

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programs surveyed reported retention rates greater than 50 percent, with only about 25 percent of programs reporting that retention was a pressing problem. While these findings are encouraging, as we will discuss below, the high retention rate may be related to the unstructured and undemanding nature of the programmatic offerings.

Program Objectives. The programs we surveyed were asked to identify their priority objectives from a list of 34, ranking them on a scale of 0 to 4, with 4 indicating that the objective was extremely important and 0 indicating it was not an objective of the program. In order of ranking, the top seven priorities among all programs surveyed were to:

1. Increase contact between father and children;
2. Improve parenting skills;
3. Increase the quality of father-child interaction;
4. Promote bonding and attachment of the father to his children;
5. Increase the involvement of fathers in the basic care and health of their children;
6. Decrease the incidence and prevalence of child abuse; and
7. Increase the involvement of fathers in children's schooling.

Statistical analysis of the data (using difference of means tests) found that these items were very highly ranked regardless of program type. In fact, if deviations between program types existed, it was due to the fact that some programs rated these seven items as being even more important than others did. In no case did any program type rate these seven priorities lower than their peers in other program subtypes.

Conversely, nine potential objectives received low scores relative to the mean ranking; in all cases, the average ranking was less than 2.0. The low-scoring objectives were to:

1. Provide legal services (divorce, custody, etc.);
2. Increase the number of fathers entering postsecondary education;
3. Increase the number of fathers who obtain a GED;
4. Reduce additional pregnancies outside of marriage;
5. Increase the number of fathers who complete high school;
6. Decrease likelihood of early fatherhood among nonfathers;
7. Promote effective use of contraception;

Culturally-Oriented Programs

Roughly 10 percent of the programs surveyed have a cultural orientation. They typically focus on the needs of a specific population, such as African American, Asian American, or Latino fathers. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Black Male Rebirth Program	To help young men assume positive roles within the family, workplace, and community.
Chinatown Beacon	To provide fun activities such as horseback riding, fishing, and boating for fathers and their children and to educate fathers on parenting issues through workshops. The organization provides holistic and integrative services to assist youth development and to improve the life of families.
De Hombre a Hombre	To encourage Spanish-speaking, monolingual Latino fathers to participate more actively in relationships with their children and in their parenting responsibilities, as well as to encourage them to take better care of their own health.

8. Build close connections between and more political activity by organizations with a fathering component or focus; and
9. Increase compliance with child support obligations.

These findings were less consistent across program subtypes. For example, pregnancy prevention programs and young/early fatherhood support programs rated early pregnancy prevention, out-of-wedlock pregnancy prevention, effective contraceptive use, high school completion, GED completion, and postsecondary education more highly than did other types of programs. This difference is both statistically and practically significant. The difference in ranking was at least 1.1 ranking points for all six items, and for two objectives (contraceptive use and early pregnancy prevention) the difference was more than two ranking points.

On the other hand, the items "build connections/political activity by organizations," "promote child support compliance," and "promote postsecondary education" had the least agreement across program type. The "build connections/political activity by organizations" item was ranked very low by five program types, including incarcerated father programs, but very highly by four others and most highly by parenting programs. The "promote child support compliance" and "promote postsecondary education" items were ranked highly by three program types: early unwanted fatherhood prevention programs; early teen fatherhood support; and responsible fatherhood programs.

Despite disagreement on the low-ranked items, it does seem safe to conclude that virtually all programs sought quality parenting and father-child interactions as their primary objectives. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that, with the exception of early/unwanted fatherhood prevention and early/teen fatherhood support programs, these initiatives generally did not have a pregnancy prevention focus and did not seek to increase educational attainment. In addition, these fatherhood programs did not view the provision of legal aide as a primary objective.

Relationship Between Program Objectives and Services. Given their indicated primary objectives, the programs we studied have tailored their individual services quite well to their chosen missions. We asked program staff to select from a 31-item list, indicating the services they provided directly, those to which they referred participants, and those which they offered participants through a third-party contractor. Sixty percent or

Disability-Oriented Programs

Several programs are intended to help fathers and families assist their children with developmental disabilities. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
CARE/Contra Costa ARC	To enhance the quality of life for people with developmental disabilities. CARE's Father Support Network pursues the goal of helping fathers learn how to be their disabled child's advocate, to organize and match fathers with other fathers for support and mentoring, and to link fathers with other services to help them raise their disabled child.
Family Resource Network	To assist families that have children with disabilities. Services for parents with children aged 0-3 are funded by the Department of Developmental Services in Sacramento. Services for parents with older children are funded through grants.

Family-Centered Programs

Family-centered programs are natural places to focus on fatherhood. These programs provide a range of services, from educational and prenatal classes for expectant fathers to cooperative parenting programs.

Organization	Mission Statement
Family Service Agency	To serve families that are expecting children or have children under the age of 3, where a family member (mom, dad, or child) is under stress. The Pregnancy to Parenthood program offers counseling, education, and support to parents (as couples or individuals) and the child. The Parent Aid program matches a trained volunteer to a family to provide mentoring to parents. The parenting class helps parents with issues of abuse and neglect. It also teaches about child development.
Father's Forum	To provide educational services through prenatal classes for expectant fathers; to help bring fathers together in the early years of parenting to form a community; to help fathers enjoy parenthood more and enjoy being fathers; and to help fathers feel less isolated.
Fathers and Families	To strengthen and build relationships between fathers and their children; to rebuild the bridges that have been lost between fathers and children; to foster "gender reconciliation" by getting parents and custody courts to recognize that it takes both parents to work together to raise children; and to promote new styles of parenting.

more of the responding programs, consistent with the parenting and support focus they indicated, reported offering five services directly: peer support groups, parent education classes, cooperative parenting classes, child development education classes, and peer/group learning opportunities.

Not surprisingly, less than 15 percent of the organizations reported that they provided the following services directly: legal services for the criminal justice system, legal services for family court, assistance or mediation for custody disputes, divorce or separation counseling, paternity establishment, structured visitation, vocational training, and GED/adult education. Rather, most organizations provided their clients with referrals to other organizations regarding legal, mental health, education, and/or medical issues. Very few programs reported contracting for services of any type.

Curricula. When we asked our sample of programs whether they used a specific curriculum in their fathering programs, about 25 percent indicated that they had developed a curriculum independently, and another 20 percent indicated that they had purchased a curriculum or received one from another organization.

Barriers and Concerns. We asked programs to rank 22 "concerns" on a scale of 0 to 4, with 4 being an "extremely important concern" and 0 being "not a concern." Only four items exceeded an average score of 2.0: insufficiency of funding, uncertainty of funding, limited participant resources, and the low priority that government agencies place on this issue. Three of these items are related directly or indirectly to program funding. The fourth is consistent with our earlier discussion of the time and economic constraints that these participants often face. A finding of some surprise was the "mismatch between services and participant needs," which received the lowest score of the 22 items (0.88, on average), indicating that programs believe they are addressing their target population's needs.

Perspectives on Program Findings

Our analysis revealed a number of challenges that most programs seem to face, from a disconnect between the call for fathering support and the public funding provided for such efforts to the inherent difficulties that programs face as they evolve their missions to serve fathers and support father involvement.

The Disconnect: A Lack of Funding from Public Sources. As with many areas of social services, shortfalls and inconsistencies in fathering, male involvement, and pregnancy prevention programs can often be blamed, at least in part, on funding problems. While several small and large private foundations have begun to invest heavily in fathering support programs, public agencies are only now beginning to make an investment in fathering support services. As we noted before, two prominent types of public agencies—justice and labor departments at all levels of government—*are making no public investment* that we could discern in fatherhood programs. This finding is even more striking in light of the recent movement to broaden the missions of child support enforcement agencies to include assistance to fathers in need. As we will discuss more thoroughly in the next section, the public efforts currently in place are often underutilized; we believe it is because participants view these agencies as suspect providers of support. This situation could present an opportunity for public-private partnership, by leveraging public funds in private organizations that have credibility with participants and the community.

Services for Whom? A Mismatch Between Program Services and Participant Needs. The most striking finding was that program objectives and services, though generally consistent within each program, did not match the needs expressed by participants themselves. This finding in and of itself is not uncommon; many social services organizations are not conversant with the needs of their service populations for a variety of good—and less laudatory—reasons. What makes this finding noteworthy is that programs themselves identified participant needs as being at odds with what they routinely offer. In other words, a mismatch often existed between what programs identified as a high priority objective and what programs, in fact, identified as the greatest challenge facing their participants. As noted in the section on participant findings, program staff reported that, indeed, the greatest challenge their fathers faced was a lack of educational attainment, followed by a need for legal counsel. Despite this knowledge, programs rarely considered education or legal assistance to be a primary objective, nor did they offer these services directly, although they did refer participants to literacy or legal aid programs.

Teen-Focused Programs

A number of programs focus specifically on adolescents, both for the prevention of pregnancy and preparation of teens for parenthood. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Huckleberry Teen Health Program	To empower young men to make healthy choices with the goal of preventing unwanted pregnancy.
Teen Pregnancy Coalition of San Mateo County	To provide comprehensive sexuality education programs to youths in 8th grade through high school in San Mateo County.

The data provide some explanations for this finding. First, as noted earlier, programs usually receive low levels of funding and employ few professionals. At a basic level, most programs simply lack the wherewithal to provide the services that fathers need most. Second, these programs tended to identify themselves as filling a particular gap in the social services network. (Literacy organizations and legal aide societies do exist and can be accessed by referral.) What the data cannot tell us, however, is whether programs develop accurate and comprehensive means for determining which services participants need, as well as who or what organization is best suited for providing it and what the quality of their services are.

Third, programs may simply assume that they are meeting the needs of their clients. The lowest-rated concern among program staff was a mismatch between service offerings and participants needs. While programs understand the needs of participants, program managers construct services that primarily involve peer support and parenting education, perhaps because of the problems they face regarding funding and the assumption that other agencies or organizations will address major issues such as literacy or legal assistance. Both peer support and parenting education are meaningful and needed services, but they may address the participants' symptoms more than the root causes—low levels of educational attainment, as well as the poverty and attendant distress that often accompanies it.

Uncertain Success: Curriculum and Program Personnel. Programs face another challenge as they attempt to make an impact on the lives of participants: the lack of a set curriculum. For many small programs, the absence of a curriculum may reflect limited funding, personnel, and participant time. Nevertheless, in our estimation, the absence of a curriculum is a serious impediment to program growth and improvement. Curricula are more than a document; they should represent the results of a long-term planning process that matches participant needs with current and potential program resources. They provide structure for ongoing activities and standards against which to evaluate performance. They usually serve as a prerequisite for fundraising activities by demonstrating why funds are needed and how they are used. Finally, in the absence of a curriculum, it is impossible to know what works and for whom. Unless one *documents and repeats* practices, it is difficult to associate successes with particular services or activities. If the fatherhood field is to develop cumulative knowledge of what works, developing and testing curricula is a critical step.

Gay/Lesbian-Focused Programs

These programs provide resources for gay fathers who otherwise might not find support in fathering settings, as well as support for parents of lesbian and gay children. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Gay Fathers Support Network	To educate and inspire gay fathers and to help them develop parenting skills; to provide support for gay fathers who are "coming out of the closet."
PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbian and Gays)	To support distressed parents and gays and lesbians; to provide education for the public; to engage in advocacy for parents, families, and friends of lesbians and gay men.

Understanding Challenges: Three Program Development Tracks. Fathering and male involvement programs represent what might be termed an "emergent" field of social services. For centuries, religious orders and then governments have provided social relief to children, mothers, the indigent, and the mentally impaired. However, social services that specifically target men who fulfill the role of father are a relatively new phenomenon. While the specific reasons for the development of this new branch of social services still have no empirical support, it can be plausibly argued that five factors encouraged the development of fathering support programs:

1. Changing views on the balance between mothers and fathers in the care of children;
2. An emerging body of evidence that (a) links child outcomes to the quality of both the mother's and father's parenting practices, and (b) highlights differentiated roles for mothers and fathers in childrearing;
3. An increase in the rate of single motherhood concurrent with an increase in father absence;
4. A growing backlash against (a) viewing fathers primarily as sources of financial support for mothers and children, (b) the greater assertiveness of women in custody disputes, and (c) the perceived bias of courts and divisions of social services toward mothers in custody cases; and
5. Rising social pressure to enforce child support orders and the emergence of the popular image of noncustodial fathers as "deadbeat dads."

Because the reasons for developing fathering programs are differentiated, there are essentially three paths to program development that organizations follow:

1. **Evolution.** Programs that evolve from pre-existing social services efforts when, through some combination of experiential knowledge, formal knowledge, and advocacy by opinion leaders in the existing field, the effort redefines its mission to include a greater focus on fathers.

School-Based/Education-Oriented Programs

Operating within and outside of formal school settings, these programs provide educational services ranging from literacy to early childhood education for children and adults. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Marin Literacy Program	To provide basic reading and writing skills to adults 16 years and older who are no longer involved in the school system; to help those adults become more active members of the community; and to help them to be able to assist and take care of their families better in the future.
Napa-Solano Head Start	To deliver a variety of services to families with young children in the spirit of family-focused, shared decision-making and community awareness. The family system is the program's primary concern; it serves children through the parents and extended family. Disadvantaged populations are a central concern.

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2. **Reaction.** Programs that provide a means for men to draw social support from one another in their roles as fathers and in their struggles with a custody and social services system that is largely viewed as adversarial and hostile.
3. **Enforcement-orientation.** Programs (often with governmental support) founded to promote paternity establishment, child support payment, and/or pregnancy prevention.

Each path to program development is accompanied by a particular set of foci and unresolved dilemmas with which programs must struggle. In our site visits and focus groups, we gained first-hand knowledge of some of these challenges, three of which we highlight below.

For programs that evolve from existing efforts, the primary challenge seems to be overcoming the institutionalized images that minimize the role of fathers as active parents, particularly noncustodial fathers. For example, several informants described how entrenched negative attitudes about father participation in schools, child care centers, and some social services agencies thwarted attempts to develop and integrate fathers into ongoing activities. For workers in these social services organizations, the focus has long been primarily on mothers and children; when fathers are considered, they are either viewed as financial supports or as neutral-to-negative forces in the lives of the primary service population. One San Francisco program director we visited decided recently to leave his program and reorient his activities solely toward deconstructing attitudes about fathers in schools and child care centers because of the frustration he experienced in his own school-based program. (See the sidebar on p. 13.)

Thus, while social services organizations may have decided to include fathers in their programs at a strategic and management level, there is still a reservoir of resistance to such change among frontline employees. Moreover, attempts to reduce resistance by incorporating male staff into programs has been undermined by the paucity of trained men in the field or men who can be prepared for the work.[10] During our site visits, two program directors independently noted the difficulty of finding and retaining trained male staff, especially since the Bay Area job market was so "tight" in the late 1990s.

For programs that develop in reaction to systems and institutional barriers, the challenge is to create a more comprehensive mission. Programs that develop along this path tend to focus almost exclusively on peer support groups and advocacy activity.

Fathering/Father-Focused Programs

These programs are specifically designed to address the needs of men regarding their role as fathers. Sample mission statements include:

Organization	Mission Statement
Dads Embracing Fatherhood	To help and educate young fathers and males to learn personal skills and be responsible sexually and financially; to prevent teenage/ young/undesired fatherhood; to provide parenting training; and to promote male involvement in children's lives.
Marin Community Development Program	To provide affordable, quality childcare for low-income families. The mission of the fathering activities of the organization is to increase the involvement of fathers in the basic care and health of their children.

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A few have branched out into community organizing and general advocacy. However, the majority of programs that fit this developmental path lack the funding, expertise, and possibly the will to address more difficult problems that require reflection on the issues that men themselves bring to the programs. No finding better demonstrates this challenge than the mismatch between the identified educational needs of programs and their unwillingness or inability to provide those services directly. When we analyzed the differences in objectives between these programs and all others for which we had data, we found they were even *less* likely to view educational attainment, pregnancy prevention, and successful contraception as objectives, although the differences were not statistically significant. On the other hand, they were more likely to view building fathering awareness and political activity as organizational objectives (at the 5 percent and 10 percent significance levels, respectively). Programs that develop reactively must attempt to find a strong basis for their continuing work.

Programs that focus on direct behavior modification and enforcement of legal or social obligations face complex challenges. Like evolutionary programs, they face the problem of modifying institutionalized beliefs about fathers; however, they face both ***organizationally*** specific and ***politically and popularly*** entrenched beliefs. Public sector practitioners are just as likely as private sector practitioners to bring negative stereotypes and attitudes to the support work they undertake. Moreover, these attitudes may be deeply felt after working within the enforcement system for many years. However, even if the organization's internal belief structure changes, the popular and political belief structures that provide support to service organizations may constitute a major impediment to changing the way public programs treat men. Our work with county-level decision-makers leads us to believe that politicians and the general public may accept the "deadbeat" dad stereotype and thus expect agencies to have hard-line collections and punishment-focused perspectives in their programs.

Unlike evolutionary programs, enforcement-oriented programs must also cope more directly with the real skepticism of potential participants; participants themselves harbor stereotypes—many of which are well-earned—of social services agencies. As we will discuss in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6, public sector programs may find it difficult or impossible to shed this stereotype as long as they continue to have an enforcement mandate. Marketing psychologists tell us that buyers develop expectations of brand names that only substantial advertising and reorganization efforts can overturn. In a sense, public sector programs face this same dilemma. Mandated to provide more than collections services, they are nevertheless saddled with a "brand name" that makes it difficult to market their services to the intended population of fathers.

Legal/Criminal Justice Programs

These programs offer services to incarcerated fathers, particularly as they make the transition back into their communities, or they may provide fathers with legal information about custody, visitation, and legal issues. A sample mission statement includes:

Organization	Mission Statement
Centerforce	To serve incarcerated individuals and their partners, families, and children. Centerforce keeps families intact during incarceration and offers programs for transportation, child care, literacy, health, and HIV education during visiting hours.

CHAPTER 5
PROFILES OF PUBLIC SUPPORT: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND EFFORT

As we noted in the previous chapter, some fatherhood programs have been created in order to improve child support compliance and to address other negative behaviors—usually on the order of the judicial system. As our findings below demonstrate, county-level policies and initiatives are largely fused: county policy is primarily driven by the imperative of child support collection; and county efforts, even when tempered by an appreciation of fathers in nonfinancial roles, are also largely driven by this one imperative. For this reason, the county fathering programs that are currently developing fall squarely in the enforcement track outlined in Chapter 4. Enforcement-oriented programs face serious challenges related to the tension between their enforcement reasoning and the growing consensus that treating fathers primarily as financial sources of support is counterproductive.

County-level initiatives are primarily driven by child support collection, even those county efforts that are tempered by an appreciation of fathers in nonfinancial roles.

Characteristics of County-Level Policies and Effort in the Bay Area

Somewhat to our surprise, we found that every county in the San Francisco Bay Area has pursued a fathering program: seven counties are currently operating programs, and two others are currently developing them. By far, the largest sponsors in terms of numbers and dollars were the county Divisions of Family Support (which are currently being brought under the Department of Child Support Services, or DCSS, in California, as described in Appendix A). Our interviews also identified three programs sponsored by county-level education authorities and several others sponsored by county departments of social services. (Due to the reorganization, the line between Family Support Divisions and the California Department of Social Services, or DSS, is increasingly being blurred; how these DSS-sponsored programs will be managed after full integration into DCSS is currently unknown.) Many of these programs were not included in the survey data because most had been operating for less than one year.

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PROFILE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

County Effort

Counties with programs: 7
Counties developing programs: 2

Governmental Roles

Planning
Administration
Implementation
Facilitation

Focus of Governmental Effort

Adolescents
Noncustodial fathers
Development of interagency/public-private service networks

Program Objectives

Increasing child support collections
Changing attitudes toward parenting
Parenting skills development
Job-market skill acquisition

Funding

Primary support from state grants and general funds
Funding levels falling, except for those programs funded with Welfare-to-Work dollars and Noncustodial Parent Demonstration Projects

Data Sharing

Significant data collected within counties
Little, if any, data sharing between counties

Years Programs Have Existed

One or fewer:	50%
One to three:	38%
Three or more:	12%

Major Concerns:

- Inability to recruit fathers
- Funding not commensurate with political support for program
- Unstable funding (except for programs supported by CalWORKs or Noncustodial Parent Demonstration Project grants)
- Small staff size
- Little time for planning or innovation

Reasons Programs Were Created:

- Low child support payment rate
- Realization that fathers are important to child outcomes
- Availability of state grants

Alameda County

Total Number of Programs	6
*Type of Program**	*Number in Alameda County*
Fathering Programs	4
Male Involvement Programs	2
Other Types of Programs	1

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families

Total Population	1,279,182
Total Unemployment	25,820
Unemployment Rate	3.5
Not in Labor Force	385,452
Percent of Families in Poverty	7.6
Economically Disadvantaged Population	92,388
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	2,656
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	19.7

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

Characterizing these efforts as "county programs" is somewhat misleading: Five are funded by state grants under the Noncustodial Parent Demonstration Project (NCPDP). This funding was made available through welfare reform activities in order to improve the child support payment rate of fathers who have children receiving TANF benefits. In most cases, these programs would not exist without the state-level initiative and its associated funding. NCPDP programs tend to have generous resources at their disposal. Respondents and public documents report that NCPDP program funding levels range from $250,000 to more than $1 million for fiscal year 1999-2000.

The non-NCPDP programs operate in a highly precarious fiscal environment. Education agency programs in Alameda, Napa, and Solano counties all reported difficulty in obtaining and maintaining funding for existing and proposed activities. For example, one informant reported that, despite demonstrable success with recruiting participants and changing behavior,[11] funding for a young fathers program had been reduced by almost 50 percent. Respondents cited competition from violence abatement programs, substance abuse programs, and programs to prepare students for "high-stakes" standardized tests as factors "crowding out" funding for fathering programs.[12]

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Focus. County policies and efforts reflect two concerns. The first—and, by far, the most important—was the imperative of child support collections. Federal and state mandates to address this issue have made collection a high priority for county officials. Second, as the collection problem has received increasing attention, a growing number of county officials has concluded that noncustodial fathers are willing to be more involved in their children's lives and that such involvement is valuable. However, they also have realized that many fathers, particularly those who are young and nonresident, lack the skills and knowledge necessary to play a positive role in their children's lives.

Forms. County-level efforts can be described as having three distinct forms. First, some efforts were planned and coordinated entirely by a public agency. Programs operated by educational authorities in the schools were

Contra Costa County

Total Number of Programs	4
*Type of Program**	*Number in Contra Costa County*
Fathering Programs	2
Male Involvement Programs	1
Other Types of Programs	1

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families	
Total Population	803,732
Total Unemployment	19,331
Unemployment Rate	3.1
Not in Labor Force	213,461
Percent of Families in Poverty	5.4
Economically Disadvantaged Population	40,477
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	1,714
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	26.0

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

the most cited example. Second, some counties contract out their effort in full, acting as a financial agent only. Third (and most prevalent), counties act as planners and coordinators for a countywide, public-private effort. (This form is mandated in the grants for NCPDP programs.) In this role, county agencies act as case managers and oversight authorities; they may also directly provide some services, depending on the resources available and the opportunities for "outsourcing" services to community organizations or local agencies. The third form may be described as constituting a "social services network"—a loose collection of independent but interdependent public and private service providers who jointly address a participant's needs. The NCPDP networks include job and career development centers, community colleges, labor unions, and Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions.

Functions. Despite funding difficulties and the paucity of county-level financial commitment, 11 of 13 respondents whose programs had advanced beyond the planning stage stated that county officials labeled fathering support efforts as a county "priority." The major exception was San Francisco, where respondents felt that negative stereotypes of noncustodial fathers had created a hostile political environment for program development.

In keeping with the enforcement focus of most government-sponsored efforts, county programs cited their principal goal as increasing participants' willingness and ability to pay child support. NCPDP programs are specifically mandated to provide "vocation-specific" training, transportation, job placement, and vocational rehabilitation services.[13] In fact, budget documents from the Department of Child Support Services state a much balder enforcement goal for the NCPDP programs:

> It is assumed there will be 1,797 "smokeouts" from Phase I [of the NCPDP] in FY 1999-00. An additional 248 "smokeouts" from Phase II in FY 2000-01. "Smokeouts" are NCPs [noncustodial parents] who are working and have not previously reported their income to child support officials, or they are NCPs who obtain jobs on their own as a result of a demonstration enforcement action (letter, contempt order) prior to being enrolled in the project....

> Based on Los Angeles County's experience with Parents' Fair Share Demonstration Project, the following is assumed: 36.1 percent of the participants will pay child support after going through employment training; the average length of time paying child support is 18 months; and, the average monthly child support paid is $91.[14]

According to budget documents from DCSS, the agency's goal is to increase child support collection from NCPDP participants by $739,000 in fiscal 1999-2000.[13]

Despite the focus on child support enforcement, both NCPDP and education agency programs have a somewhat broader goal than most "traditional" child support-oriented programs. Respondents consistently stated that their programs were designed to improve the relationship between noncustodial fathers and their children and to stress the importance of fathering to the development and well-being of children. As one program director noted,

> We'd also like to assist NCPs [Noncustodial parents] in providing other forms of support [besides child support] for their children, wherever this is appropriate, so that the quality of the relationship that parent has with the child is improved.

In general, public programs serve a narrow slice of the potential population of fathers who require assistance. By definition, the NCPDP programs only serve noncustodial fathers who are not complying with child support orders. The education-sponsored programs are generally targeted at adolescent males who have already become fathers or who are judged to be at risk of becoming fathers before leaving school. In general, *none* of the public programs serve:

- Noncustodial fathers who are meeting their child support obligations;
- Fathers, irrespective of custodial status, who are emerging from incarceration;
- Married fathers who are at risk due to poverty or substance abuse; and
- Custodial fathers.

The focus is almost exclusively on those who have child support obligations or who are fathers in their teens or early twenties.

Marin County

Total Number of Programs	**12**
*Type of Program**	*Number in Marin County*
Fathering Programs	1
Male Involvement Programs	6
Other Types of Programs	6

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families	
Total Population	230,096
Total Unemployment	2,700
Unemployment Rate	2.0
Not in Labor Force	66,692
Percent of Families in Poverty	3.0
Economically Disadvantaged Population	14,157
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	411
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	25.0

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

Napa County

Total Number of Programs	**1**
*Type of Program**	*Number in Napa County*
Fathering Programs	0
Male Involvement Programs	1
Other Types of Programs	0

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families

Total Population	110,765
Total Unemployment	2,134
Unemployment Rate	3.4
Not in Labor Force	35,462
Percent of Families in Poverty	4.6
Economically Disadvantaged Population	6,307
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	291
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	31.0

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census, State of California, Employment Development Department.

San Francisco County

Total Number of Programs	**13**
*Type of Program**	*Number in San Francisco County*
Fathering Programs	5
Male Involvement Programs	6
Other Types of Programs	2

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families

Total Population	723,959
Total Unemployment	13,212
Unemployment Rate	3.1
Not in Labor Force	251,816
Percent of Families in Poverty	9.7
Economically Disadvantaged Population	68,684
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	1,445
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	18.9

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

Reach. Public programs also serve relatively few people. On average, respondents reported an annual service population of 20 participants—and even this number is inflated. Several programs reported serving higher numbers because they accepted mandated participants from family court. Respondents attributed low participation rates to hostility toward the involvement of county DAs in the NCPDP programs. Respondents consistently cited hostility toward the justice system and DAs in particular as factors limiting recruitment efforts. Potential participants might have perceived that these programs were driven by a concern for their fiscal capacity rather than a concern for their ability to nurture and raise a child. However, our interviews also found that most recruiting was done informally—by word of mouth and past participant referrals. As was true of private-sector programs, there was very little effort in these initiatives to reach "hard cases." Moreover, a governmental effort to serve these fathers might be especially unsuccessful, given their deep mistrust of the justice system.

Measures. To understand better whether counties were creating data sources that captured information about fathers and the quality of fathering, we asked respondents to outline their data collection and sharing strategies. As expected, most agencies collected a great deal of information, but most of it was related to children and mothers. The only regularly collected "fathering indicators" related to a father's presence or absence and his financial obligations to the family and/or child. Little or no data on other indicators were collected by any agency. Within counties, few agencies reported performing cross-agency information sharing, and virtually no information is shared across counties with respect to fathers and fathering indicators. The major inhibitors at both the intra- and intercounty levels were confidentiality concerns and insufficient technical expertise to integrate data systems. Respondents generally agreed that the quality of fathering is an important consideration in child outcomes and that data on this issue are needed. However, respondents were generally unaware of any effort to collect such data and did not believe this effort was a priority for county governments.

Primary Challenge. When we asked programs to highlight their most pressing concerns, most cited problems

San Mateo County

Total Number of Programs	**12**
*Type of Program**	*Number in San Mateo County*
Fathering Programs	5
Male Involvement Programs	6
Other Types of Programs	2

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families

Total Population	649,623
Total Unemployment	8,116
Unemployment Rate	2.0
Not in Labor Force	179,567
Percent of Families in Poverty	4.3
Economically Disadvantaged Population	32,059
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	1,153
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	22.1

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

with recruiting program participants. In fact, several NCPDP programs faced grant reductions because they had not met recruiting targets and had no prospect of doing so in the next fiscal year.

Santa Clara County

Total Number of Programs	26
*Type of Program**	*Number in Santa Clara County*
Fathering Programs	4
Male Involvement Programs	9
Other Types of Programs	15

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families	
Total Population	1,497,577
Economically Disadvantaged Population	79,132
Total Unemployment	30,359
Unemployment Rate	3.2
Not in Labor Force	371,902
Percent of Families in Poverty	4.8
Economically Disadvantaged Population	79,132
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	3,312
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	26.4

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

Perspectives on County Agency Findings: In the Shadow of Government

There can be little doubt concerning the policy focus of both county and state governments with respect to fathers: prompt and regular collection of child support obligations. The structure and operation of NCPDP programs represent the most concrete manifestation of this mandate. The fact that programs in schools are losing funding to other priorities only reinforces this point—unless nonpayment is an issue, other county policies receive higher priority. Although it is impossible to prove a negative, it also seems clear that the level of coordination both within county social services structures and between counties on issues of father support is low. As far as we could determine, there has been no attempt to coordinate the NCPDP effort with existing school or private initiatives, except where counties decided to contract out entirely their fathering support efforts. For example, Marin County contracted their fathering effort to the California Parenting Institute.

Coordinated effort usually requires a degree of data sharing. Yet, our interview data reveal that virtually no fathering-related data existed and virtually none were shared between agencies. Counties operated "stovepipe" enforcement-oriented policies and support efforts, with a secondary—and diminishing—interest in supporting adolescent fathers. Public effort to reach fathers who fall outside of the enforcement categories was nonexistent, despite the fact that support efforts might have helped to maintain marriages or relationships between parents and to decrease the number of noncustodial fathers.

Clearly, it is not unreasonable to believe that the strategic foci of the counties are too narrow, a topic to which we will return in Chapter 6. However, even if we accept enforcement as the primary goal of county efforts, there are also reasons to believe that the approach they have chosen—employment-oriented programs operated by public agencies—is deeply flawed. There are two different sets of issues to consider. The first is

Solano County

Total Number of Programs	1
*Type of Program**	*Number in Solano County*
Fathering Programs	1
Male Involvement Programs	1
Other Types of Programs	0

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families

Total Population	340,421
Total Unemployment	8,951
Unemployment Rate	4.8
Not in Labor Force	89,605
Percent of Families in Poverty	6.0
Economically Disadvantaged Population	22,564
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	721
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	22.5

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

the substantive focus of the programs that do exist. As we noted before, the NCPDP programs are statutorily limited to "vocation-specific education and training programs."

Our data on program participants (which are supported by findings from NCOFF work with young, low-income fathers in Indianapolis[16] and from other studies) indicate that "vocation-specific" education is *a second-order concern* for many—and possibly most—fathers who might enroll in a program like NCPDP. The inability to read, write, and calculate at a sufficiently high level is the more basic employability issue. To put the matter bluntly, vocational education is likely to be of marginal use, at best, if the father or mother cannot read the materials presented. At their worst, these programs may create another educational environment in which the learner experiences failure due to low literacy and thus becomes even more reluctant to engage in additional education. For a minority of potential participants, more basic concerns emerge regarding substance abuse and mental illness or impairment. NCPDP programs are allowed to engage "other supportive services" as needed; yet, it is unclear whether these programs regularly engage mental health and substance abuse professionals. Our data and interviews with program managers and practitioners in private sector programs clearly indicate the need for these services.

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A second, and possibly more daunting, challenge for county efforts is that they are developed under the "shadow" of government power. Even if most services are contracted to private vendors, county governments still act as "gatekeepers" to these services. Noncustodial fathers perceive—perhaps appropriately—that these programs are oriented primarily toward their child support performance, even if they do offer more than just employment-oriented assistance. Registration with a program is certain to alert authorities about fathers' location and employment status. Because such programs virtually assure that a large portion of any additional dollars earned by the father are allocated to child support payments, government sponsorship of the program undermines incentives to participate.

If a father decides to participate in the employment component of a private program, his participation is decoupled from the personal return he might enjoy from his educational efforts. First, even if he is motivated by a

deeply held wish to benefit his child—and our data suggest that many, maybe most, fathers participate at least in part for this reason—his additional effort nets no gain for the child, because child support dollars are used to offset state TANF obligations. Second, program participation ensures that governmental authorities have a better chance of tracking his employment activity and confiscating additional income. Finally, even when questions of financial incentives are not at issue, there is a suspicion among men involved with family courts in the Bay Area that the courts and DAs are biased against them. Our focus groups with private sector participants and program coordinators evoked extremely strong and negative reactions regarding the family court system in the Bay Area. While programs may seek to provide greater employment support, fathers may not believe that this effort is the agenda of the program. Instead, most fathers assume that the programs have an ulterior motive that is negatively related to their interests. The shadow of government comes from the direct interaction with a public authority, not from the public funding of an effort. As we will suggest in the conclusion of this report, to overcome this "shadow," county and state funding should consider becoming "silent" partners in fathering support programs through "arms-length" funding of private initiatives and a separation of support efforts from enforcement actions.

Sonoma County

Total Number of Programs	7
*Type of Program**	*Number in Sonoma County*
Fathering Programs	4
Male Involvement Programs	7
Other Types of Programs	7

* Programs may be listed in more than one category.

Data on County Families	
Total Population	388,222
Total Unemployment	7,001
Unemployment Rate	2.8
Not in Labor Force	90,096
Percent of Families in Poverty	5.2
Economically Disadvantaged Population	21,543
Number of Dropouts Aged 16 to 21	841
Percent of Population Aged 16 to 21 who Dropout	25.7

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Bureau of the Census; USA Counties 1996, U.S. Bureau of the Census; State of California, Employment Development Department.

CHAPTER 6
REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the surface, our results appear to be relatively simple and straightforward. However, upon closer inspection of these basic findings, several complex issues and strengths emerge.

The BAyFIDS Project continues to identify programs in the San Francisco Bay Area and monitor their nature and status. Our goal in preparing this report was to present the initial results of our work to inform fatherhood initiatives throughout the Bay Area on the number, structure, and operation of fathering programs and about the disposition and involvement of county agencies in fathering efforts. On the surface, the results of our inquiry appear to be relatively simple and straightforward. First, there are over one hundred programs in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area—programs that are diverse in mission, participants, size, and history. Second, although a core of effort is evident at county levels, relatively little coordination is apparent between programs and county agencies. However, upon closer inspection of these basic findings, several complex issues and strengths emerge.

Reflections on the Findings

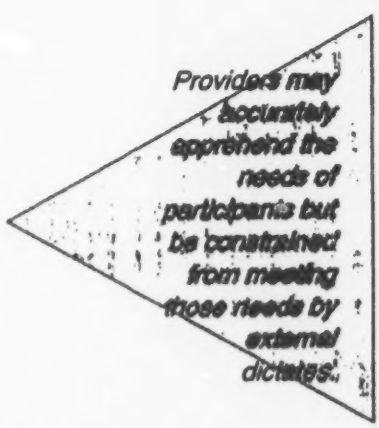
Overall, the data we collected provide a clear image about the durability of programs over time; the inconsistencies between programs' larger goals to support fathers and their willingness or ability to invest in basic educational, personal, employment training, and pregnancy prevention efforts; and the emerging but still limited connection between local fathering programs and county efforts for children and families. The data also identify a set of challenging circumstances within programs themselves: programs generally have low levels of funding coupled with low levels of certainty about what funding exists; the duration of a father's participation is not guaranteed; "progress" and "success" are hard to measure because most programs (like their peers nationally) do not use a set curriculum; programs have had equivocal success in securing community involvement in their and others' efforts to support fathers and families; and local programs and county agencies rarely share ideas or funding.

In the discussion that follows, we highlight the challenges and consequences of the general patterns and strengths observed, as well as the

problematic themes that emerged regarding programming and coordination from our review of survey data, interviews, and visits. Based on these considerations, we also offer recommendations that stakeholders in fatherhood initiatives in the Bay Area might follow to ensure the stability, efficacy, and coordination of these programs.

Issues for Programs and Practitioners. In many aspects, fathering programs in the Bay Area are more advanced than similar initiatives in other regions of the United States, particularly in the comprehensive perspectives held by many practitioners who work with early childhood education and child care. At the same time, shortfalls in the number, staffing, and capacity of these programs has caused them to be insufficiently developed and self-sustaining and thus less able to attend to the range and severity of issues that confront many fathers and their children and families.

- **The Number and Primary Focus of Fathering Programs.** As of Spring 2000, an estimated 154 programs in the Bay Area provided some form of fathering support. However, this figure may not reflect the full number of programs that attend to issues of parenting for men. Many organizations that provide services to fathers do not view themselves as being primarily involved in this area of social services and often do not self-identify as being fathering programs or as having a fathering component. While it is not immediately apparent from the survey data, this finding may indicate that organizations which socially construct themselves as "schools," "child care centers," or "adult education programs" may underutilize the resources—fiscal and otherwise—that are available from governmental and private sources to support fathering. One area for future research is to explore how the social construction of social services organizations may help or hinder their ability and willingness to provide services to fathers.
- **The Diversity and Organization of Fathering Programs.** These programs are diverse in mission, ranging from improving early child care or early childhood education, to supporting men in their roles as fathers, to assisting incarcerated fathers. On the other hand, a feature of many county-supported efforts is their focus on child support enforcement. At the same time, fathering programs focus on issues ranging from male involvement to the prevention of teen pregnancy; they are likely both to be located in larger parent organizations and to exist as freestanding initiatives, unattached to any official agency, institution, or organization.
- **The Communities of Fathers Targeted for Services.** A larger number of initiatives in our sample focus on fathers across income levels—particularly on middle-income white fathers—than would probably be found in other parts of the state. This bias may be due to two factors: a large share of the programs we studied are male involvement programs, and the demography of the Bay Area is considerably diverse. Still, most programs are likely to focus on


Providers may accurately apprehend the needs of participants but be constrained from meeting those needs by external dictates.

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Shortfalls in the number, staffing, and capacity of programs caused them to be less developed, sufficient, and self-sustaining to attend to the range and severity of issues that participants confront.

noncustodial fathers in general, although many such as Head Start and early childhood education programs are focusing increasingly on fathers in and outside of the home. Fathering programs in the Bay Area are not always targeted on low-income fathers but do overwhelmingly focus most of their services on low-income, noncustodial fathers. Some are addressing issues of gay fathers.

- **The Resource and Funding Shortfall.** Not unlike programs throughout the United States, fathering programs in the Bay Area are functioning with few resources, both in terms of funding and staff. This shortage of support is affecting the number of services that programs can provide, as well as the quality of the services provided. The programs that serve fathers who have the fewest resources—young, minority, noncustodial fathers with limited schooling and inadequate employment or employment preparation—are often vulnerable themselves. In addition, these programs typically offer short-term services, a situation that is at odds with the severity of the problems and scope of need presented by the entering father.
- **The Strengths and Weaknesses of Program Staff.** Most programs have few staff, and most staff members, other than the director, do not have professional training. However, practitioners in Bay Area fathers and families programs typically represent a broad cross-section of experience, professional expertise, and programmatic interest. Although many do not have professional experience in this area, they bring a wide range of talents to the programs and processes of supporting fathers—expertise that exists outside formal training but is often vital to identifying and supporting the needs of fathers in many programs. In addition, for most programs, a paucity of male staff either for fathering-related programs or for child-centered services has become a critical concern. Programs often search for an extended period before identifying appropriate male staff members. Because these men are in demand, turnover of male staff after only a short period of employment is very high. Program directors believe there is a value to having male role models on staff but to date have not discovered effective ways to recruit and retain them.
- **The Barriers to Father Involvement Embedded in Social Services.** Despite increased awareness across different types of programs, staff in child care centers or schools often actively discourage fathers—especially noncustodial fathers—from participating in programs or activities with their children. Staff members' attitudes may help to foster and reinforce the notion that fathers have no role in schools, child care centers, and other places where social services are provided. Additionally, these attitudes may inhibit development of fathering support services within these social services environments. We do not know how widespread this phenomenon is or

what the roots of these attitudes might be—for example, such father-negative attitudes may be related to the racial or ethnic composition of a program's surrounding neighborhood. Regardless, providing better services to fathers may depend on finding effective ways to address these attitudinal barriers.

- **Legal and Attitudinal Barriers to Nonbiological Father Involvement.** Legal and attitudinal barriers to the involvement of nonbiological fathers—those who have no legal relationship to the children in question but who fulfill the fathering role—often create a significant barrier to their participation in programs. Most educational and child care agencies are legally barred from allowing nonbiological fathers a voice in the education and/or care of the children for which they have accepted *de facto* responsibility. Such legal and attitudinal barriers make it more difficult for nonbiological fathers to establish themselves as advocates for their children and thus may undermine their motivation to assume fathering roles for these children.

Issues for Program Participants. Both practitioners' descriptions of participants and participants' own accounts in our focus groups indicated a particularly difficult set of circumstances facing many Bay Area fathers.

- **The Diversity of Need.** Increased attention to fathering in the Bay Area has helped to expand the number of programs that attend to issues of fathering and male involvement. However, these programs are diverse, and there is no coordination or comprehensive attention to the range of fathers' needs. The diversity of those needs include divorced fathers who are concerned about custody and visitation; those seeking support networks as they become single parents; those who are wrestling with questions about the quantity and quality of their involvement; and those who intend to deepen their commitment to parenting cooperatively with the mothers of their children.
- **The Scope of Difficulties Facing Young Fathers.** Young, low-income, noncustodial fathers represent the largest group of fathers served in Bay Area fatherhood programs. They often demonstrate concern about their children and a desire to contribute positively to their children's lives. However, they are often confronted with multiple problems, including limited education and employment potential; difficult relationships with the mothers of their children and the child's maternal extended family; and barriers created by a lack of support from their own families of origin and their friends. Developmentally, these men are often overwhelmed with the expectations of their new roles as fathers.
- **The Inattention to Physical and Mental Health Issues.** Issues of fathers' physical and mental health are critical yet relatively unexamined. One site in particular (the Mexican American Com-

Program staff bring a wide range of talents to the programs and processes of supporting fathers—expertise that is often vital to identifying and supporting the needs of fathers in many programs.

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munity Service Agency, or MACSA, in Gilroy) noted the importance of providing mental health services as an integrated aspect of services offered to fathers. In fact, the staff at MACSA believe their program's success is largely tied to their ability to package services for fathers, including mental health.

- **The Constraints on Participation Facing Fathers.** From the perspectives of practitioners, the barriers to father involvement, particularly those who are low-income, include time constraints due to holding multiple/informal jobs; institutional and attitudinal barriers; low educational attainment; and (to a lesser extent) discouragement from peers, families, and authority figures.

Issues for County-Level Agencies. County-level activities have the potential to bridge state and local initiatives and expand the work of local programs, but they require a deeper knowledge of the field and of the programs already in place in order to promote that work.

- **The Potential for Support.** Efforts at the county level include initiatives based in both social services agencies and educational contexts. County agencies are as much in the business of providing programs as supporting them, particularly those focused on child support enforcement and related work.
- **The Location of County Effort.** Where issues of fathering fit into county agency work is difficult to ascertain. An initiative may exist at the county level. However, it may be promoted and/or implemented by child support enforcement authorities, family services agencies, or schools. It is unclear how decisions are made about where an effort is best placed.
- **The Lack of Knowledge Held by County Policymakers and Practitioners.** County-level policymakers and staff often demonstrate enthusiasm about the work of fatherhood initiatives but know little about programs or the broader context of fathering.
- **The Lack of a Systematic Approach.** There is no evidence of a systematic approach to integrating fatherhood in county-level initiatives on children and families.

Legal and attitudinal barriers make it more difficult for nonbiological fathers to establish themselves as advocates for their children and thus may undermine their motivation to assume fathering roles for those children.

Primary Challenges. From our review of findings on Bay Area fathering programs, we have identified five primary factors that challenge the provision of services, whether in programs or in social services agencies:

- **A mismatch between the expectations providers have of participants and participants' capabilities and challenges.** In many cases, providers develop biased or unrealistic expectations—both too ambitious and limited—of what participants want, need, or will seek out. As a result, agencies and programs often develop services that are targeted toward unexpressed needs.
- **A mismatch between participant expectations and providers' capabilities, values, and goals.** Participants may develop misapprehensions of what providers are seeking to achieve or what they

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can achieve. On the one hand, participants may misunderstand or overestimate the goals of the program—for example, believing that agency programs are really meant to "lure" them into the child support enforcement system. Alternatively, participants may believe programs offer hard-to-find services—like legal counsel—which they, in fact, cannot provide. In these cases, services go unused or programs experience retention problems.

- **The imposition of external constraints.** Providers may accurately apprehend the needs of participants but be constrained from meeting those needs by external dictates. For instance, agencies whose primary mission is to collect child support may acknowledge the need for educational enrichment or psychological assessment but be unable to provide it due to restrictions on the use of funds. Similarly, participants may be externally constrained: their work or family life may impinge on their ability to seek out or use services on a regular basis.
- **Insufficient provider capabilities.** Providers may accurately apprehend the needs of participants but lack the financial resources or expertise necessary to undertake the required services. This services shortfall may be particularly true in cases when specific expertise around mediation, literacy, domestic violence, and related areas is needed.
- **A misdiagnosis by participants of their own capabilities and challenges.** Because participants in fathering programs are usually not mandated to participate, they must accurately assess their own abilities as fathers before they seek services or support. The transition to fatherhood, as research on role transitions suggests, presents challenges for fathers of all ages and income levels. Young or first-time fathers, particularly those with few resources, may lack the information necessary to assess their own knowledge gaps. In these cases, the services that programs provide may go unused because the potential participants do not recognize either their own capabilities or challenges.

County-level policymakers and staff often demonstrate enthusiasm about the work of fatherhood initiatives but know little about programs or the broader context of fathering.

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Recommendations

We are acutely aware of the contradictions in recommending courses of action for programs that often do not have the funding to implement those improvements. The broader problems, however, are not only issues of funding but also of capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and the effective utilization of existing services. Perhaps the greatest challenge—and question—is the degree to which programs and county agencies can initiate conversations that ultimately result in the creation of more seamless efforts and enduring, positive change for children, their fathers and mothers, their families, and their communities.

We are equally aware of the limitations of the data. Although the survey data from this first phase of the BAyFIDS project yield useful information about programs, they do not reveal the embedded issues facing fathering programs, fathers and families, and communities, nor do they explore integrated approaches that support children and families.

With an acknowledgment of both the strengths and limitations of the data, we make several recommendations for programs, county agencies, and funders to pursue.

For ***Bay Area fathering programs***, we recommend that they:

- Focus directly and deliberately on developing a curriculum to direct their activities, in part to help them determine what works and why;
- Challenge themselves to move away from immersion in familiar, traditional, or "easy" approaches to attract and sustain men's participation and invest in activities such as literacy, parenting, mental health, and workforce development that will help men over the long-term;
- Consider themselves as the center of a service network, since they typically have expertise in specific areas but must access and think strategically about how to utilize their own resources to help participants find the other services they need—especially around education, legal assistance, and mental health care;
- Utilize that service network not only to support father participants but also to identify, prepare, and support staff members;
- Assert themselves within county and state efforts and rely less on county agencies to seek them out; and
- Create a strategic plan for recruiting and retaining participants and staff, particularly for male staff members, as well as for preparing staff to contend with the diversity of the populations served, their long-term needs, and the role of the program in helping them attend to these needs.

Perhaps the greatest challenge—and question—is the degree to which programs and county agencies can initiate conversations that allow for the creation of more seamless father-supporting efforts.

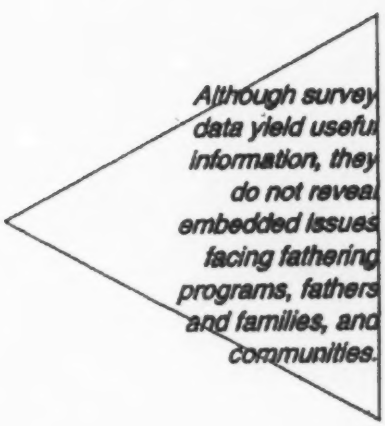
For ***Bay Area county agencies,*** we recommend that they:

- Become more knowledgeable of programs within their boundaries;
- Initiate collaborative efforts with existing fatherhood programs and more thoroughly integrate public initiatives with ongoing private efforts, in part because many fathers are reluctant to join publicly-sponsored efforts;
- Consider how state- and county-level agencies, such as labor and justice departments, can become credible fathering services providers (for example, our data found that these departments could—but rarely do—fund fatherhood efforts);
- Determine how data collection on fathers and fathering would help to inform service provision, since very few data are currently collected and/or shared across agencies or with programs; and

- Create strategic plans around fathering initiatives that address how data on fathers will be included and used in databases on children and families, how staff members will come to understand the integration of fatherhood in existing child and family support activities, and how staff should respond to new initiatives and mandates around father involvement.

For ***Bay Area foundations and other funding communities,*** we recommend that they:

- Help to foster dialogue between public and private sector fatherhood efforts, particularly social services and child welfare;
- Provide funding for programs to establish curricula and to revise these curricula as needs change;
- Sponsor programs to help create community support networks, for example among fathering/male involvement programs, literacy/educational programs, and mental health programs;
- Support research that identifies systematically which practices are most efficacious for which types of father/family combinations;
- Support research that identifies ways of creating supportive knowledge-sharing relationships between programs and practitioners, particularly around monitoring and measuring change in participants' fathering behaviors; and
- Challenge fathering/male involvement programs to develop interventions that address at least one aspect of their basic needs, such as some form of educational intervention for both child and parent.



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ENDNOTES

[1] The National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF), based in Washington, D.C., aims to assist frontline practitioners by identifying and utilizing services and resources, as well as by keeping them abreast of new legislation and its potential effects on service delivery to fathers and families at local and state levels.

[2] There is still limited work conducted in these educational settings. Some efforts, such as those being implemented by the U.S. Department of Education, are intended to make the issue of father involvement a part of the growing discussion in schools. Father involvement is increasingly a focus of Head Start and Early Head Start programs and in the demonstrations and research studies about them.

[3] This number reflects a broad range of potential programs. However, it is difficult to determine actual numbers since programs may take different forms and may not be attached to any formal group or network.

[4] The purpose of the NCP Demonstration Project is to determine whether providing employment, training, supportive services, and parental training to unemployed or underemployed, noncustodial parents of children receiving public assistance will result in increased child support payments, reduced public assistance, and increased parental involvement in their children's lives (Bernard and Knitzer, *Map and Track*, 1999, p. 92).

[5] These three items—fathering, family strengths, and positive outcomes for children—are interrelated and fundamental to understanding the role of fathers.

[6] Subsequent reports by The Annie E. Casey Foundation have demonstrated modest changes in the well-being of children and father involvement.

[7] One of the focus groups which we conducted with practitioners served the dual purpose of focusing on these practitioners as fathers. These men met regularly as a collective and were leaders in individual fathering networks. The meetings were designed to provide updates. We found the focus group with these men enlightening in helping us capture not only the issues that they face as fathers but also their concerns as program leaders.

[8] Young men in fathering programs often report that they feel unsupported by families and friends. When NCOFF was first established, we examined the role of families of origin in relationship to the influence and impact on fathers' behaviors and practices (see Core Learning 6, Intergenerational Learning) and the complex relationships between fathers and the mothers of their children (see Core Learning 5, Cooperative Parenting).

[9] Employment and education are inextricable for many of the young fathers participating in programs. In meetings with practitioners throughout the country, practitioners consistently referred to the need for programs to focus more directly on workforce development and literacy, stating that education was a critical barrier to fathers' employment and sustained engagement with their children.

[10] The reported problems in recruiting male staff members were related to whether there were adequate numbers of qualified men who were willing to assume the responsibilities associated with following-up with young fathers, who would accept the rate of pay offered for the positions, and who would have potential for advancement. Almost every practitioner to whom we spoke considered the lack of a male workforce in fathering programs a serious drawback to sustainable programming. The need for male staff is more a statement of the need for behavior modeling and a recognition that some men would be more comfortable with male staff, rather than a statement of the incompetence or inability of women to administer these programs.

[11] On more than one occasion, county-level staff spoke of the difficulty of recruiting participants and seemed unaware of programs which might serve as resources within their county.

[12] The competition for limited funds complicates the development of sound programs, as practitioners become more concerned with sustaining programs rather than refining them.

[13] California Department of Child Support Services, Administration, Fiscal Management Bureau. (2000). May Subvention. Source: www.dss.cahwnet.gov/maybinderpdf/ 09DCSSFinalMethodologies.pdf. See page 19.

[14] California Department of Child Support Services, Administration, Fiscal Management Bureau. (2000). May Subvention. Source: www.dss.cahwnet.gov/maybinderpdf/ 09DCSSFinalMethodologies.pdf. See page 20.

[15] California Department of Child Support Services, Administration, Fiscal Management Bureau. (2000). May Subvention. Source: www.dss.cahwnet.gov/maybinderpdf/ 09DCSSFinalMethodologies.pdf. See page 21.

[16] Findings from a study of young fathers in Indianapolis, conducted by NCOFF, demonstrate the salience of education as a defining feature in a father's ability to obtain and sustain employment and to be engaged positively with his children.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Child and Fathering Systems in California

Appendix B: BAyFIDS Survey Instruments

Appendix C: National Resources on Fathers and Families: Practice, Policy, and Research Organizations

APPENDIX A
CHILD AND FATHERING SYSTEMS IN CALIFORNIA

California, like most states, divides responsibility for child support and father services between a variety of state departments, county offices, and local agencies. Though stable for many years, the system has recently undergone a major revolution, with the creation of the California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) on January 1, 2000. Below, we review the role major social services systems play in supporting children and fathers.

California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS)

The California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS), formerly the Office of Child Support in the California Department of Social Services (DSS), was established on January 1, 2000. DCSS is a department within the California Health and Human Services Agency that works at the state level with other departments—such as the Department of Social Services, the Franchise Tax Board (FTB), and the Employment Development Department—to administer the Federal Title IV-D program (e.g., federal child support enforcement programs). DCSS oversees Family Support Divisions in each county, which are soon slated to become local child support services agencies, as partners in serving children entitled to child support, custodial and noncustodial parents, employers who process wage assignments for support, and unmarried parents who require paternity determinations and support orders.

When the new legislation is fully implemented, DCSS will control field offices in all 58 counties. The field offices will be responsible for establishing paternity and obtaining and enforcing child and medical support orders. The county offices are assuming responsibilities formerly invested in the Family Support Divisions of the county District Attorneys' offices. The task of managing delinquent accounts receivable and collecting past due support will be handed over to the FTB. The FTB, in cooperation with the DCSS, will also be responsible for developing the statewide automation of child support cases.

To improve the effectiveness of child and medical support collections statewide, the new law mandates uniform policies, procedures, and forms. Under the new law, the DCSS will involve the California Judicial Council

(a body chaired by the Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court) and a variety of interested stakeholders to develop and adopt standard child support and paternity establishment forms. DCSS's stated goal is to make the opening and closing of child support enforcement cases more efficient, while generating more reliable information about arrearages and support actions.

Fatherhood Services. In the interim, DCSS has assumed responsibility for three ongoing initiatives: the Responsible Fatherhood effort, the Paternity Opportunity Project (POP), and the Noncustodial Parent (NCP) Demonstration Project. The Responsible Fatherhood effort works with major league sports teams and local media outlets to encourage responsible fatherhood. The Oakland Raiders, San Francisco Giants, Anaheim Angels, and San Diego Padres participate in these publicity campaigns. The Paternity Opportunity Project works with hospitals, birthing facilities, prenatal clinics, county welfare offices, vital records offices, and courts to promote paternity acknowledgments. This effort focuses on obtaining a formal *Declaration of Paternity* from unmarried men by emphasizing the rights fathers gain and the benefits children enjoy by establishing paternity as early as possible. POP also runs 30-second public service announcements on California television stations.

The NCP Demonstration Project is probably the most substantial and well-funded of the three initiatives, although it is only gradually coming under DCSS control. Under Section 3558 of the California Family Code (implemented on January 1, 1997), judges may order noncustodial parents who have children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and who are appearing before the court for the nonpayment of child support to attend job training and to seek job placement and vocational rehabilitation services. The California Department of Social Services is establishing pilot projects in 13 counties for a period of three years to determine whether providing enhanced services to nonpaying noncustodial parents would increase child support collections. The project involves a cooperative effort at the state and local levels between the contractor(s), the district attorney's office, the county welfare office, DSS/DCSS, and the Employment Development Department. Implementation of the project is taking place in two phases. During Phase I (initiated in December 1998) programs were established in Contra Costa, Napa, San Francisco, and Santa Clara Counties. Phase II (initiated in January 2001) established programs in Alameda County. San Mateo County began a demonstration effort in 1997 that will be folded into Phase II funding. In fiscal year 1999-2000, over $5.9 million were directed to this effort.

California Criminal Justice and Family Court System

California's justice system is divided into three levels: trial courts, courts of appeal, and the Supreme Court. Trial courts are organized into two levels: municipal courts that handle misdemeanor offenses, and superior courts that handle felony offenses and family court matters, such as divorce, child custody, child support, and domestic violence matters.

Superior courts can make both temporary and permanent orders regarding child custody and visitation, child and spousal support, and restraining orders. All counties provide conciliation services to protect the

rights of children as well as mediation for child custody and visitation problems. Some counties also offer premarital counseling and free or low-cost conciliation services for couples who want to save their marriage or work together during the divorce.

Child Custody. In California, either parent may be awarded custody of a child or the couple can share custody. The judge makes the final decision but usually approves any arrangement agreed upon by both parents.

Child Support. Under California law, the right to support does not belong to the parent who has custody of a child; the right to support belongs to the child. Each parent has an equal responsibility to support a minor child, depending on income. Parents who are divorcing may agree on the child support plan, but a judge must approve the amount of child support payments. When parents cannot agree on a plan, the judge decides whether a spouse is entitled to payments and the amount thereof. Subsequently, either spouse may ask the judge to change the amount. Child support payments are usually made until children reach age 18 or age 19 if they are still in high school.

If the parent does not make child support payments, the person entitled to the payment may do any of the following:

- Ask the judge to find the nonpaying parent in "contempt of court." The penalty for contempt may be a fine, jail, or both.
- Ask the county district attorney to deduct back payments from the spouse's state income tax refund. The district attorney also could charge the spouse with a misdemeanor punishable by a fine or a maximum one-year jail sentence or both.
- File forms to garnish wages or put a lien on bank accounts and/or property.

Juvenile Court. The juvenile courts, which are part of the superior courts, are responsible for: (1) the administration of justice when the offender is a minor; (2) the rehabilitation of "incorrigible" minors (e.g., minors beyond the control of parents, chronic truants, runaways, minors disobedient to lawful parent rules, etc.); and (3) the disposition of children under 18 years of age who become juvenile dependents of the state. Children become dependents of the state when they are removed from their parents for cause (e.g., neglect, abuse, etc.) or due to death or disability of parents when no guardian is appointed.

If a child becomes a dependent of the court, the court takes responsibility for the child and assumes the right to make orders for the parent, the child, and the social workers managing the child's care. Such decisions are based upon a petition lodged by county counsel. Under this system, parents are entitled to a trial before a judge regarding their conduct and the best interests of the child. Children may be represented in these hearings by a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

A state social worker prepares a report for the court, based on an investigation. The report will include recommendations about where the child should live for the next six months, when the next court hearing will be held, and what the parent(s) must do to solve the problems that led to the complaint.

The social worker also creates a case plan that is presented to the court. The court usually orders that all or part of the case plan be carried

out. The case plan may include parenting classes, individual counseling, family counseling, treatment for abuse of alcohol and other drugs, special programs or classes, and supervised visitation with the child. If the child is removed from the parent's custody, the case plan must include services to help the parent(s) reunify with the child and to achieve legal permanence (e.g., adoption or appointment of a legal guardian) for the child should reunification fail. At any time, the parent may choose to relinquish reunification rights.

Drug Court. California has begun to experiment with drug courts at the county level. Drug courts operate within the Superior Courts as an alternative mechanism to traditional adjudication and incarceration. Drug courts incorporate treatment into incarceration, emphasize nonadversarial approaches and defendant education over punishment, and use continuing interaction with the defendants post-incarceration to discourage relapse. This program is often (though not always) targeted at young offenders.

California Educational System

The State of California supports a State Board of Education, headed by an elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The State Superintendent is Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of the California Department of Education.

Each county has a Board of Education that mediates between the State Board of Education and the local districts. The county board advises and assists school districts in the following areas: managing their budgets; supervising and supporting school districts in complying with state and federal laws; providing services to school districts that they could not offer on their own; educating groups of students not served by local school districts through the Juvenile Court and Community Schools, School Age Mothers Program, and the Infant Programs; and assisting teachers by providing training opportunities, curriculum development, and technology resources. The services selected and used depend on the demands of either the State Board or the local districts.

Each county supports one or more school districts. School districts, on a case-by-case basis, may offer parenting prevention programs to men and women (especially in communities with large "at-risk" populations), parenting skills classes, and special programs to assist teens who become mothers or fathers. Many schools also offer more traditional health and sex education classes that address sexuality and reproduction.

The California Department of Education's Child, Youth and Family Services Branch helps schools and communities design responsive family service delivery systems—including healthy parenting adolescent programs, service learning, and foster youth services—to improve students' school success and foster their healthy growth and development. The branch promotes accessible and meaningful parent education and parent involvement in schools and coordinates family-school partnership strategies throughout the department.

The branch also broadens the base of support for education by developing interagency relationships at the state level in order to establish common goals and focus resources on issues of children and families. The division also helps to coordinate Head Start, Healthy Start, reduced-price lunches, and other programs.

California Department of Social Services

Each county in California maintains a local agency office that coordinates services in that county. Services for children include Adoptions, Cal-Learn, Child Care (provided to help parents transition off welfare), Foster Care, Foster Parent Program, Protective Services, Child Abuse Prevention, and Child Support. For families, they include California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) (primary post-reform welfare program), Child Support (now in DCSS), Food Stamps, Emergency Food Assistance Program, Refugee Programs, and Protective Services. For adults, they include Continuing Care, Welfare-to-Work, In-Home Supportive Services, Protective Services, and Refugee Programs.

As a strategy for reducing teen pregnancy rates and long-term welfare dependency, the Cal-Learn program was designed to assist teen parents participating in CalWORKs. The Cal-Learn program helps pregnant and parenting teens to attend and graduate from high school or its equivalent. This ambitious effort consists of three coordinated services designed to help teens become self-sufficient adults and responsible parents. Intensive case management assists teen parents to obtain education, health, and social services, as well as payments for necessary child care. Transportation and educational expenses enable pregnant/parenting teens to attend school. Finally, bonuses and sanctions encourage school attendance and good grades. Four $100 bonuses/sanctions per year may be earned/applied based on report card results, plus a one-time $500 bonus for graduating or attaining an equivalent high school diploma.

Pregnant/parenting teens who are receiving CalWORKs are required to participate in Cal-Learn if they are under the age of 19 and have not graduated from high school or its equivalent. Effective January 1, 1998, an otherwise eligible teen who is 19 years of age may continue to participate in the Cal-Learn Program on a voluntary basis until he or she earns a high school diploma or its equivalent or turns 20 years old. Pregnant/parenting teens may apply for Cal-Learn services at any welfare office located in the county where they live.

APPENDIX B
BAYFIDS SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Survey of Fathers and Families Programs

National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF)
Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania
in collaboration with:
SRI International, Incorporated
Survey Research Center, University of California, Berkeley

This survey is part of a project examining programs that provide support to fathers. We very much need your assistance to ensure the success of the survey. We will use the information that you provide for two purposes. The first purpose is to create a program directory and database. Information from questions which have an asterisk (*) next to them will be used in the directory of programs and will be available to the public through a program database, accessible through the Internet.

Our second purpose is to collect information on the work of programs themselves, that is, on your missions; goals; participants; needs, issues, and problems faced; and successes. We believe that such information would be extremely useful to a variety of individuals committed to issues related to fathering, child welfare, and family services. Our goal is to create a portrait of programs that will inform program developers such as yourself, others in existing programs, and individuals considering starting up programs. It will also be of value to researchers and evaluators who are involved with or who want to support programs, policymakers at different levels of government that have begun to focus on father-related services, and advocates in the field.

We would appreciate you taking the time to fill out the enclosed questionnaire. Feel free to have other staff members fill out portions of the survey that pertain to their responsibilities. If you have any questions, please contact NCOFF at (215) 573-5500 or via e-mail at the address *hayfids@ncoff.gse.upenn.edu*.

Once we have the compiled information we will send you a copy of reports and papers resulting from the survey, and will inform you when the directory is available. Thank you for your participation.

Your name: _____

Your title: _____

Your organization's name (*): _____

Your organization's address (*): _____

Your phone number (*): _____

Your fax number (*): _____

Your e-mail address (*): _____

Your program's Web page (*): _____

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SECTION I: General Information

I-1 (*) Which of the following categories best describes your program? [Check one.]

___ a) for profit (with two or more employees)
___ b) nonprofit (formally recognized as such under 501c3—such as religious groups, community based organizations, colleges, universities etc.)
___ c) partnership (formally constituted with shared liability)
___ d) public school or school district (including subunits such as vocational-technical schools or district-run adult evening/night schools)
___ e) state, county, or municipal agency or department
___ f) state, county, or municipally-owned corporation
___ g) informal network or group (not recognized as a nonprofit under 501c3 and having no permanent staff or jointly owned facilities)
___ h) independent consultant/sole proprietor
___ i) other (please specify) _____

I-2 (*) Does your organization or program administer, own, or manage more than one site where services to fathers, families, or teenage males are offered.

___ a) We only have one site—**Go to I-3 (page B-4).**
___ b) This is an administrative site; we operate more than one service site—**Go to I-2b.**
___ c) This service site is administered, owned, or managed by another organization—**Go to I-2c (page B-4).**

I-2b (*) How many sites do you operate? _____

To make our directory complete, we would like to send a copy of this survey to each site you own, operate, or manage. Please list the contact person and phone number for each of the additional sites. [**If you need additional space, please use a blank sheet.**]

Site 1: Contact Person _____

Phone _____

Site 2: Contact Person _____

Phone _____

Site 3: Contact Person _____

Phone _____

Site 4: Contact Person _____

Phone _____

Now continue with Question I-3.

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I-2c (*) Please provide us the name, contact person, address, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and Web site address **for the organization that administers, owns, or manages this site?**

Contact person: _____

Contact person's title: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Web site: _____

Now continue with Question I-3.

I-3 (*) Are you the person individuals or referring agencies should contact in order to join or refer someone to your program?

___ Yes

___ No—**if No, please provide the name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail address for the intake contact person.**

Contact person: _____

Contact person's title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

I-4 (*) Please check off and (if necessary) list the counties in which your participants live.

Counties

___ Alameda
___ Contra Costa
___ Marin
___ Napa
___ San Francisco
___ San Mateo
___ Santa Clara
___ Solano
___ Sonoma

Other: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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I-5 (*) Please list the municipalities (and the county for each municipality) in which at least 10% of your participants live.

Municipality and municipality's county. If your site serves neighborhoods in a larger city, please note which ones. For instance, if you serve Hunter's Point and Outer Sunset in San Francisco, enter "San Francisco (San Francisco County) – Hunter's Point, Outer Sunset."

SECTION II: Program Information

If you work for a multi-site organization, please respond only for this site.

II-1 (*) How would you describe the mission of your organization or program?

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II-2 (*) How long has your organization or program…

Existed? _____ years, _____ months
Been in operation at this site? _____ years, _____ months

II-3 (*) What are the target population(s) at this site? [Check all that apply.]

___ a) mothers

___ b) children and adolescents

___ c) teens (as part of early parenthood prevention programs)

___ d) families

___ e) fathers

___ f) other

II-4 (*) Do you serve any of the following sub-populations? [Check all that apply.]

___ a) incarcerated mothers or fathers

___ b) immigrants

___ c) non-custodial mothers or fathers

___ d) disabled adults [if yes, list any disabled populations you specifically serve]
_____

___ e) disabled children or teens [if yes, list any disabled populations you specifically serve]
_____

___ f) other _____

II-5 (*) Are there any specific restrictions on who your program may serve? For instance, some programs are restricted by their grant to serve certain ethnic groups or people of a certain status (for example, low income populations or the disabled).

___ Yes—if Yes, please briefly explain. _____

_____

_____

___ No

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II-6 (*) Do you serve fathers at this site in any fashion?

___ **Yes—if Yes, then got to Section III (page 7).**

___ **No—if No, then go to II-7.**

II-7 (*) Do you plan to include fathers in your existing services during the next six months?

___ Yes How will they be included? _____

_____

___ No

II-8 (*) Do you plan to create new, separate services focused specifically on fathers during the next six months?

___ Yes

___ No

Why? _____

_____

_____

If you answered "Yes" to question II-6, please go to Section III (page B-7).

If you answered "No" to question II-6, please go to the last section of the survey, entitled "Section VII: Other Fathering or Family Programs in Your Area" (page B-28).

SECTION III: Fathering and Father Prevention Services

III-1 (*) How long have you addressed fathering or fatherhood issues in your program(s)? [Fill in a number.]

_____ years

_____ months

III-2 (*) Does the county provide you with any funding for your fathering program(s)?

___ Yes

___ No

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III-3 Was your organization founded primarily to provide services to fathers?

___ Yes—**Continue with III-3.**

___ No

What was the primary population(s) the organization was founded to serve? [Check all that apply.]

___ a) expecting or first-time mothers over the age of 18
___ b) expecting or first-time adolescent mothers under the age of 18
___ c) children under the age of 18 and their mothers
___ d) teen parents (both father and mother)
___ e) youth programs serving children and adolescents
___ f) teen programs designed for early pregnancy prevention
___ g) families
___ h) other _____

How long after the founding of the organization was a fathering component added?

_____ years

_____ months

III-4 What were the circumstances or conditions that led you to believe that a fathering program(s) was necessary? [Check all that apply.]

___ a) there were no specific circumstances
___ b) funders promoted the addition of a fathering program/fathering component to our existing program(s)
___ c) clients desired a fathering component in the existing program(s)
___ d) shortcoming in maternal programs could be addressed best by adding a separate fathering program or a fathering component to the existing program
___ e) shortcoming in family programs could be addressed best by adding a separate fathering program or a fathering component to an existing program
___ f) shortcoming in child or teen programs could be addressed best by adding a separate fathering program or fathering component to an existing program
___ g) other _____

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III-5 (*) Would you describe your program as a "male involvement program" or a "fathering program?" Male involvement programs are designed specifically to encourage men, both fathers and non-fathers, to become involved in family and community life in support of children. Many offer fathering support as a part of their activities but do not consider "better fathering" as their primary mission.

Fathering programs are designed specifically for fathers. They focus overwhelmingly on promoting responsible fatherhood. Based upon these two different purposes, would you describe your program(s) as primarily a...

___ male involvement program?

___ fathering program?

___ other _____

If you work for a male involvement program, do you provide activities and services that are related to fathering?

___ Yes—if Yes, what was your motivation to create/develop the program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

___ No

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III-6 (*) Objectives for fathering programs vary, and some objectives are more important than others. From the following list, choose the objectives that are important to you and rank them on a scale of 0 to 4, with 0 being "not an objective" to 4 being "an extremely important objective."

Importance					Objectives
Not an Objective				Extremely Important	
0	1	2	3	4	a) decrease likelihood of early fatherhood among non-fathers
0	1	2	3	4	b) prevent unwanted pregnancy
0	1	2	3	4	c) reduce additional pregnancies outside of marriage
0	1	2	3	4	d) promote effective use of contraception
0	1	2	3	4	e) increase contact between father and child(ren)
0	1	2	3	4	f) increase involvement of fathers in basic care and health of child(ren)
0	1	2	3	4	g) improve parenting skills
0	1	2	3	4	h) increase involvement of fathers in child(ren)'s schooling
0	1	2	3	4	i) increase quality of father-child interaction
0	1	2	3	4	j) promote bonding and attatchment of father to child(ren)
0	1	2	3	4	k) promote father's financial contributions to child(ren) and family
0	1	2	3	4	l) decrease incidence and prevalence of spousal abuse
0	1	2	3	4	m) decrease incidence and prevalence of child abuse
0	1	2	3	4	n) decrease incidence and prevalence of drug and alcohol abuse
0	1	2	3	4	o) reduce fathers' interactions with the criminal justice system
0	1	2	3	4	p) support fathers' ability to balance work and family life
0	1	2	3	4	q) increase likelihood that families will stay intact
0	1	2	3	4	r) reduce likelihood of divorce or seperation
0	1	2	3	4	s) support fathers to improve basic literacy skills
0	1	2	3	4	t) increase the number of fathers who complete high school

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Importance					Objectives
Not an Objective		Important		Extremely Important	
0	1	2	3	4	u) increase the number of fathers who obtain a GED
0	1	2	3	4	v) increase the number of fathers entering postsecondary education (college, university, technical school, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	w) improve employment chances for fathers
0	1	2	3	4	x) provide pre-employment and life skills training
0	1	2	3	4	y) increase compliance with child support obligations
0	1	2	3	4	z) provide legal services (for example divorce, custody, visitation issues, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	aa) increase fathers involvement in community organizations
0	1	2	3	4	bb) increase involvement of fathers in community networks (i.e. employment, support, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	cc) increase participation in fathering efforts by community organizations (including religious insitutions, schools, community centers, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	dd) build stronger communities
0	1	2	3	4	ee) increase public awareness of fathering issues
0	1	2	3	4	ff) build close connections between and more political activity by organizations with a fathering component or focus
0	1	2	3	4	gg) influence public policy that affects fathers and their ability to act as fathers
0	1	2	3	4	hh) other_____

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III-7 (*) Below is a list of different types of fathering programs. Check off **all descriptions** that fit the **activities at this site.** If you offer programs that do not fit these description, check **"Other"** and provide a description.

___ *Early/Unwanted Fatherhood Prevention*: programs aimed at male teenagers with the goal of promoting abstinence, safe sex, and/or protected sex. These programs are offered, in many cases, in schools.

___ *Early/Teen Fatherhood Support Programs:* programs aimed at encouraging teen fathers to be involved, responsible, active parents to their children. These programs are often an extension of support programs for mothers and may be found in schools, hospitals, and community-based organizations (CBOs).

___ *Divorce Support Programs:* programs that provide assistance to fathers making the transition from fatherhood in a two-parent setting to fatherhood under the aegis of formal or informal custody arrangements. These programs may be voluntary or mandatory, may be offered via Family Court referrals, and may be provided by agencies or CBOs.

___ *Abusive Household Support Programs:* programs that attempt to maintain father engagement with families while issues of spousal and/or child abuse are resolved. These programs may be voluntary or mandatory and may be offered through social service agencies, Family Court, the criminal justice system, and/or in-patient or out-patient counseling centers and hospitals.

___ *Incarcerated Fathers Support Programs:* (a) programs that attempt to maintain father engagement with their families while in prison; (b) programs that provide parenting skills to fathers in prisons; and (c) programs that provide assistance to fathers making the transition from prison to home and work life. These programs are usually coordinated by correctional institutions, but may be provided by CBOs, non-profits, or even for-profit organizations (both within the institution and/or the neighborhoods to which the fathers return).

___ *Workplace/Work-Related Fathering Initiatives:* programs to help fathers maintain a balance between work and family responsibilities. These programs may be located at the work site or may be offered through schools, continuing education programs, or CBOs.

___ *Responsive Fathering Programs:* programs that promote responsible, nurturing father involvement with their children. These programs are often offered by CBOs, but may also be voluntarily or mandatorily offered by child support enforcement authorities (among other agencies).

___ *Parenting Programs:* programs that prepare youth and young parents to become more knowledgeable about children's developmental needs. These programs may be offered within or outside of educational settings, in child welfare, or in family services.

___ *Other:* _____

_____

_____

III-8 (*) Program participants usually need many types of services. Programs have three options to meet their participants needs. They may provide the service directly; they may contract and pay another organization to provide the service; or they may refer participants to another organization for the service (but not pay for it). For each of the following services, please check off whether you provide it directly, contract for it, or refer to others for it. If your organization does not usually concern itself with such a service, leave the line blank.

You may check off more than one option for a given service.

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Provide Directly	Contract For	Refer to Others	
_____	_____	_____	a) individual counseling (for example, therapy for dealing with emotional problems, abusive behaviors, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	b) group counseling (for example, family counseling)
_____	_____	_____	c) peer support
_____	_____	_____	d) parent education
_____	_____	_____	e) child development education
_____	_____	_____	f) cooperative parenting (for example, communication skills)
_____	_____	_____	g) job search/placement assistance (for example, interview coaching)
_____	_____	_____	h) pre-employment assistance (for example, workshops on dealing with others in the workplace)
_____	_____	_____	i) vocational training
_____	_____	_____	j) GED/adult education
_____	_____	_____	k) adult basic education/adult literacy
_____	_____	_____	l) life skills training (e.g., basic household and financial management, basics of dealing with schools and courts, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	m) peer/group learning opportunities (for life, parenting, and/or job skills)
_____	_____	_____	n) health care/medical services
_____	_____	_____	o) family planning services
_____	_____	_____	p) drug and/or alcohol counseling
_____	_____	_____	q) paternity establishment (for example, assistance in navigating the system)
_____	_____	_____	r) legal services for family court issues (for example, child neglect, custody, visitation, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	s) legal services for criminal justice system issues
_____	_____	_____	t) marital counseling
_____	_____	_____	u) divorce or separation counseling
_____	_____	_____	v) assistance/mediation for custody disputes
_____	_____	_____	w) monitored visitation/neutral site visitation
_____	_____	_____	x) structured visitation (e.g., scheduled, structured activities for parents during short visitations with children)
_____	_____	_____	y) services for fathers transitioning from incarceration to family life
_____	_____	_____	z) services for fathers recovering from drug or alcohol abuse
_____	_____	_____	aa) services for fathers transitioning back into the family after separation due to domestic abuse, including spousal or child abuse.
_____	_____	_____	bb) transportation (for work, training, visitations, etc.)
_____	_____	_____	cc) social activities
_____	_____	_____	dd) opportunities to extend employment or childcare networks
_____	_____	_____	ee) other_____

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III-9 Of all the services you offer, contract for, or refer others to, which four have helped to advance the goal of your fathering program(s) most? Look over Question III-7 and place a check mark to the right of the services you find most useful in advancing your goals. Then continue with Question III-9.

III-10(*) How long, on average, are your fathering-related program(s)?

_____ weeks _____ months _____ years

During a typical week, how many mandatory/formal hours are offered to participants? How many voluntary/informal contact hours are usually available?

_____ mandatory/formal hours

_____ voluntary/informal hours

III-11 On average what percentage of the fathers who enroll in your program(s) complete the curriculum?

___ less than 10%
___ between 10% and 30%
___ between 30% and 50%
___ between 50% and 70%
___ between 70% and 90%
___ more than 90%

III-12 (*) Was your fathering curriculum...

___ a) developed by your own organization or program?
___ b) purchased commercially?
___ c) developed by another organization or program?
___ d) developed internally using some commercial materials?
___ e) developed internally using some materials from other organizations or programs?

If you use commercial products, which title(s) do you use? _____

_____

If you use another organization or program's materials, what is the name of that organization or program? _____

_____

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III-13 (*) Some programs find it important to engage members of the father's family and circle of friends and acquaintances. Does your program offer services to any of the following? If so, check off whether services are offered as a separate program or as an integrated component in the fathering program.

	Separate Program	**Integrated with Fathering Program**
___ wife/life partner	_____	_____
___ ex-wife	_____	_____
___ current significant other	_____	_____
___ mother(s) of child(ren)	_____	_____
___ children	_____	_____
___ extended family (for example, the father's	_____	_____
___ parents, sisters, brothers, etc.)	_____	_____
___ friends or more distant relatives	_____	_____
___ others	_____	_____

III-14 What would you describe as the three greatest success of your fathering program(s) over the past two years?

a)_____

_____

_____

b)_____

_____

_____

c)_____

_____

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III-15 What are some of your greatest concerns about your fathering program(s)? From the following issues, choose those that are important to you and rank them on a scale of 0 to 4, with 0 being "not a concern" to 4 being "extremely important concern." Do not rate those issues you do not consider important.

Importance					Concerns
Not a Concern		Important		Extremely Important	
0	1	2	3	4	a) insufficient funding
0	1	2	3	4	b) uncertainty of funding
0	1	2	3	4	c) lack of personnel willing/qualified to work with fathers
0	1	2	3	4	d) inadequate physical facilities
0	1	2	3	4	e) too little demand for our services
0	1	2	3	4	f) too much demand for our services
0	1	2	3	4	g) poor advertisement of our services to men who need them
0	1	2	3	4	h) limited participant resources (time, money, transportation, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	i) male participants' problems—too expensive and deep for our program to solve
0	1	2	3	4	j) participants—not sufficiently committed to the program's activities
0	1	2	3	4	k) participants' families—unsupportive or actively discourage fathers from going to the program
0	1	2	3	4	l) low priority this work seems to have with state, county, and/or local government
0	1	2	3	4	m) lack of community involement in our program
0	1	2	3	4	n) too little information or research on good practices in this field (We don't know if we are doing the right things.)
0	1	2	3	4	o) isolation (I and others in this program feel isolated; we don't have connections to other practitioners.)
0	1	2	3	4	p) lack resources for evaluation of program effectiveness
0	1	2	3	4	q) lack resources for strategic planning
0	1	2	3	4	r) lack of resources for investments in technology

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Importance					Concerns
Not a Concern		Important		Extremely Important	
0	1	2	3	4	s) staff support to participants with family court issues (custody, divorce, settlement,etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	t) staff support to participants with criminal justice system issues (lawyers, intervention with parole officers, etc.)
0	1	2	3	4	u) mismatch between services and participants needs (please specify _____)
0	1	2	3	4	v) other_____

III-16 What two to three services have been most difficult to run and why?

a)_____

_____

b)_____

_____

c)_____

_____

III-17 If you could suggest one new service or program for fathers to a funder or policymaker, what would it be and why?

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SECTION IV: Description of People Served

IV-1 How many people do you serve in a year at this site?

Either check off a range or write in the number :_____ participants

___ none
___ fewer than 10
___ 10 - 20
___ 21 - 30
___ 31 - 40
___ 41 – 50
___ 51 - 100
___ 101 - 150
___ 151 - 200
___ 201 - 250
___ 251 - 500
___ 501 - 1000
___ more than 1000

IV-2 On average, how many people are enrolled or being served on any given day?

Either check off a range or write in the number:_____ participants

___ none
___ fewer than 10
___ 10 - 20
___ 21 - 30
___ 31 - 40
___ 41 – 50
___ 51 – 100
___ 101 - 150
___ 151 - 200
___ 201 - 250
___ 251 - 500
___ 501 - 1000
___ more than 1000

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IV-3 How many people in each of these categories do you serve in a year? Check off the appropriate range for each population. [Leave a column blank if you do not serve that population.]

Range	Fathers	Mothers	Teens	Children & Adolescents	Families
fewer than 10	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10 - 20	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
21 - 30	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
31 - 40	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
41 – 50	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
51 - 100	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
101 - 150	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
151 - 200	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
201 - 250	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
251 - 500	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
501 - 1000	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
more than 1000	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

IV-4 How many program participants fall into the following ethnic groups? [Report results for all participants and for fathers only, if appropriate.]

All Participants

_____% Asian/Pacific Islander
_____% Black (of African or Caribbean descent)
_____% Latino (of Spanish, Portuguese Central American, South American, or Caribbean descent)
_____% Native American
_____% White
_____% Other: _____
100%

Fathers

_____% Asian/Pacific Islander
_____% Black (of African or Caribbean descent)
_____% Latino (of Spanish, Portuguese Central American, South American, or Caribbean descent)
_____% Native American
_____% White
_____% Other: _____
100%

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IV-5 How many program participants fall into the following household income groups? [Report results for all participants and for fathers only, if appropriate.]

All Participants	**Fathers**
_____% 50-100% of the poverty line (between $7,525 and $15,050 annually)	_____% 50-100% of the poverty line (between $7,525 and $15,050 annually)
_____%100-150% of the poverty line (between $15,050 and $22,575 annually)	_____% 100-150% of the poverty line (between $15,050 and $22,575 annually)
_____% 150-200% of the poverty line (between $22,575 and $30,100 annually)	_____% 150-200% of the poverty line (between $22,575 and $30,100 annually)
_____% 200-250% of the poverty line (between $30,100 and $37,625 annually)	_____% 200-250% of the poverty line (between $30,100 and $37,625 annually)
_____% more than 250% of the poverty line (over $37,625 annually)	_____% more than 250% of the poverty line (over $37,625 annually)
_____% other: _____	_____% other: _____
100%	**100%**

IV-6 How many program participants fall into the following age groups? [Report results for all participants and for fathers only, if appropriate.]

All Participants	**Fathers**
_____% 16 or younger	_____% 16 or younger
_____% 17-20	_____% 17-20
_____% 21-25	_____% 21-25
_____% 26-30	_____% 26-30
_____% over 30	_____% over 30
100%	**100%**

IV-7 Marital status: What percentage of the men in your program fall into the following categories?

_____% married
_____% separated or divorced
_____% never married
100%

Of married men...

_____% not living with mother of any biological child(ren)
_____% living with mother of one or more of their biological child(ren)
100%

Of separated or divorced men

_____% not living with mother of any biological child(ren)
_____% living with mother of one or more of their biological child(ren)
100%

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Of never married men

_____% not living with mother of any biological child(ren)

_____% living with mother of one or more of their biological child(ren)

100%

IV-8 Child relationships: What percentage of the men in your program...
[Items will not add up to 100%.]

_____% have no relationship with their children when they enter your program?

_____% develop relationships with one or more of their children during the program? if they had no relationships with their children before entering the program?

_____% are under court order to pay child support?

IV-9 Child support: What percentage of the men in your program who are under order to make child support payments...

_____% regularly make their payments?

_____% do not make their regular payments?

100%

IV-10 Employment upon entering the program: What percentage of the men in your program...

_____% have only one full-time job (at least 35 hours/week) and no part-time jobs?

_____% have only one part-time job (less than 35/week) and no full-time jobs?

_____% have more than one full-time job (and no part-time jobs)?

_____% have more than one part-time job (and no full-time jobs)?

_____% have one or more full-time and one or more part-time job?

_____% are unemployed?

100%

Of unemployed men...

_____% what percent do you suspect are involved in informal economies, such as street peddling, house repairs, car repairs, etc.?

IV-11 Educational attainment

On average, how many years of schooling do fathers in your program have? _____

What percentage of the men in your program have...

_____% no high school diploma and no GED (or equivalents from another country)?

_____% a high school diploma (or equivalent from another country's school system)?

_____% a GED (or equivalent from another country)?

_____% have some post-secondary education (college, technical school, etc.)?

100%

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IV-12 Literacy: what percentage of the men in your program....
[Items will not add up to 100%.]

_____% read below the 6th grade level?

_____% are unable to use mathematics (for example, to balance a checkbook, calculate a tip, or complete an order form)?

IV-13 Difficulties with reading, writing, and calculation sometimes reduce participants' ability to engage in the program activities, interact with their children, or participate in family life. What percentage of your participants fit into the follow categories? [Please distinguish between all participants and fathers, if appropriate.]

All Participants

_____% have trouble reading program materials

_____% are unable to express themselves effectively in writing (e.g., are unable to write a letter to teacher or ex-spouse regarding a problem with a child)

_____% lack mathematical skills necessary to children with homework

_____% lack the reading skills necessary to help their children with homework

_____% cite lack of reading, writing, or mathematical skills as a reason they cannot find a job

Fathers

_____% have trouble reading program materials

_____% are unable to express themselves effectively in writing (e.g., are unable to write a letter to teacher or ex-spouse regarding a problem with a child)

_____% lack mathematical skills necessary to help help children with homework

_____% lack the reading skills necessary to help their children with homework

_____% cite lack of reading, writing, or mathematical skills as a reason they cannot find a job

All Participants

_____% are unable to read well enough to the safety of their children (e.g.,are unable to read medicine bottles, food label, etc.)

_____% are unable to read or write well enough to participate effectively in legal proceedings children regarding their children

Fathers

_____% are unable to read well enough to ensure ensure of their children (e.g., are unable to read medicine, bottles food label, etc.)

_____% are unable to read or write well enough to participate effectively in legal proceedings regarding thier children

IV-14 What percentage of the men in your program have...

_____% no children currently but are expecting one?

_____% 1 child?

_____% 2 - 3 children?

_____% 3 - 4 children?

_____% 4 - 5 children?

_____% more than 5 children?

100%

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IV-15 Of the men in your program with only one child, what percentage have...

_____% no contact with their child?
_____% less than 1 day per week?
_____% 1 or 2 days per week?
_____% 2 or more days per week, but not full custody?
_____% full custody?
100%

IV-16 Of the men in your program with more than one child, what percentage have...

_____% no contact with any of their children?
_____% less than 1 day per week with all or most of their children per week?
_____% 1 or 2 days with all or most their children per week?
_____% 2 or more days with all or most of their children per week, but do not have full custody of any children?
_____% full custody of all or most of their children?
100%

IV-17 What percentage of men in your program(s) have children by more than 1 mother? _____%

IV-18 What are the particular strengths that you think men bring with them when they enter your program(s)? Check off all that apply.

_____a) desire to change behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, child or domestic abuse, criminal activity, etc.
_____b) desire to become more involved with their children and/or family
_____c) desire to become more responsible regarding their sexual behavior
_____d) willingness to learn
_____e) commitment to and enthusiasm for the program
_____f) desire to get a job
_____g) desire to gain skills that will make them more employable
_____h) previous life experience with parenting and children
_____i) educational achievement
_____j) financial resources
_____k) support of family and friends
_____l) support of child(ren)'s mother(s)
_____m) support of employers
_____n) support of other helping professionals (therapists, psychologists, etc.)

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IV-19 What are the primary problems that men bring with them when they enter your program(s)?

_____a) low motivation to participate in the program (possibly because participation is mandated)
_____b) lack of support from family or friend for their role as fathers
_____c) lack of support from child(ren)'s mother(s) for their role as fathers
_____d) attitudes that link procreation with manhood but do not link procreation to responsibility for children and their financial, social, and psychological support
_____e) joblessness
_____f) low income
_____g) inability to read or write at a high enough level to get a job, pursue further education, or help children with their homework
_____h) lack of mathematical skills needed to get a job, pursue further education, or help children with their homework
_____i) mental illness (including depression and forms of psychosis)
_____j) medical disability
_____k) addiction to drugs or alcohol
_____l) continued child or domestic abuse
_____m) continued illegal activity (including drug dealing, theft, violence outside the family, etc.)
_____n) lack of basic knowledge regarding reproduction and contraception
_____o) lack of knowledge regarding access to governmental assistance programs
_____p) lack of legal assistance for family court matters
_____q) lack of legal assistance for criminal justice system matters
_____r) insufficient time for participation in child(ren)'s life
_____s) insufficient time for participation in program

IV-20 How do you recruit new participants; that is, how do fathers and families find your program?

_____ former or current participants
_____ word of mouth from non-participants
_____ advertising
_____ affiliation with a religious organization
_____ referral from community or social service agencies
_____ mandates (from criminal justice system, family court, etc.)

If you receive referrals, what agencies, organizations, or professionals usually provide the referrals? _____

_____

_____

If you receive mandatory referrals, which agencies provide and administer the mandates?

_____

_____

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SECTION V: Program Funding

If you work for a multi-site organization, please respond only for this site.

V-1 What was your total budget for fathering activities at this site in 1998?
Either check off a range in the number: $_____

_____ less than $50,000
_____ between $50,000 and $100,000
_____ between $100,001 and $150,000
_____ between $150,001 and $200,000
_____ between $200,001 and $250,000
_____ more than $250,000

V-2 Over the last three years has your budget...

_____ increased [by approximately_____%]?
_____ decreased [by approximately_____%]?
_____ stayed the same?

V-3 **Public funding.** Use the boxes below to indicate if you receive funding from one of these agencies at the federal, state, county or local level. For instance, if you receive funding from the federal Department of Health and Human Services, put a check in the upper lefthand box. If you receive funding from the county Department of Labor and Employment, put a check in the box in the bottom row, third column.

	Levels of Government			
Types of Agencies	**Federal**	**State**	**County**	**Local**
Health and Human Services				
Education				
Justice				
Labor				
Other (please specify)				

V-4 Now think about which public agency provides you with the most funding. Put a second check in the appropriate box above to indicate which public agency is your largest funder. For instance, if the federal Department of Health and Human Services is your largest public funder, put a second check in the upper lefthand box.

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V-5 Public funding represents_____% of our **total budget for this site.**

V-6 What are the sources of your private funding (if any). [Check off those that apply]

_____ foundations
_____ community organizations
_____ church
_____ fundraisers (auctions, dinners, direct appeals, etc.)
_____ other (please specify) _____

Put a second check mark to the right of the type that provides you the greatest amount of private funding.

V-7 Private funding represents _____% of our **total budget for this site.**

V-8 How many employees and volunteers do you have?

_____ full-time employees
_____ part-time employees
_____ volunteers

V-9 Of your employees, how many are professionals of the following types?

_____ social workers
_____ psychiatrists
_____ psychologists
_____ sociologists
_____ medical doctors
_____ lawyers
_____ others

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SECTION VI: Community Relations

VI-1 How would you describe the nature of your organization or program's relationship to community organizations?

VI-2 What do you do specifically to support community efforts?

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SECTION VII:
Other Fathering or Family Programs in Your Area

We are attempting to survey every fathering program in the San Francisco Bay Area, therefore we would appreciate your help in identifying other programs you are aware of. Please list the name and contact person for any programs you are aware of in the space below.

Thank you for participating in this research project.

APPENDIX C
NATIONAL RESOURCES ON FATHERS AND FAMILIES:
PRACTICE, POLICY AND ADVOCACY, AND RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

Appendix C contains a selective list of organizations providing technical assistance in the family support and fatherhood fields. The organizations are classified according to a focus on practice, policy and advocacy, and research.

Technical Assistance. Specific examples of technical assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Program Evaluation
- Curriculum Development
- Training Workshops
- Media Campaign Development
- Program Start-Up
- Peer Support Group Facilitation

Data Sources. This document was compiled from information posted on each organization's website, listed in printed brochures or program descriptions, and contained in NCOFF's *Father&Family Link* database (fatherfamilylink.gse.upenn.edu).

Practice Organizations

The At-Home Dad Network
Baltimore City Healthy Start, Inc.
Bay Area Male Involvement Network
Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth
The Fathers Workshop, Erie Family Center
Family Support America
Father Resource Program
Father to Father Project
FatherWork
Fathers' Forum Online
Goodwill Industries-Children UpFront Program
The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood & Family Revitalization
MAD DADS, Inc.
National Center for Fathering
National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth
National Fathers Network
National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families
St. Bernadine's Male Involvement Project
Washington State Fathers Network

Policy and Advocacy Organizations

Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy
Dads and Daughters
Florida Commission on Responsible Fatherhood
National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership
National Fatherhood Initiative
National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices
National Parenting Association
Pennsylvania Fatherhood Initiative
Single and Custodial Fathers Network
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Research Organizations

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Policy Research
Child Trends, Inc.
Fatherhood Project, Families and Work Institute
Harvard Family Research Project
Joint Center for Poverty Research
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation
Motivational Educational Entertainment Productions, Inc.
National Center for Children in Poverty
National Center on Fathers and Families
National Council on Family Relations
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Public/Private Ventures
The Urban Institute
Vera Institute of Justice
Welfare Information Network

Practice Organizations

The At-Home Dad Network

61 Brightwood Avenue
North Andover, MA 01845
Phone: 508-685-7931
E-mail: athomedad@aol.com
URL: http://www.parentsplace.com/readroom/athomedad
Contact: Peter Baylies, Editor and Publisher

Scope: National Focus: Practice
The At-Home Dad Network is a project devoted to providing connections and resources for the two million fathers who stay home with their children. The network produces *At-Home Dad*, a quarterly newsletter created and edited by Peter Baylies.

Baltimore City Healthy Start, Inc.

600 North Cary Street
Baltimore, MD 21217
Phone: 410-728-7470
Contact: Joe Jones, Director of Men's Services and Employment

Scope: Local Focus: Practice
Baltimore City Healthy Start was created as part of a national demonstration project intended to reduce infant mortality by 50 percent in Baltimore's highest risk communities and to address the costly health problems afflicting babies born with low birth weights. As part of the demonstration, centers were established in two of Baltimore's most distressed neighborhoods. Aggressive outreach efforts have brought thousands of pregnant women into the program for support and guidance in changing risk behaviors and managing crises.

Bay Area Male Involvement Network

99 Porteous Avenue
Fairfax, CA 94930
Phone: 415-454-1811
Fax: 415-454-1752
Email: SSeider101@aol.com
URL: http://www.bamin.org
Contact: Stan Seiderman, Director

Scope: Local Focus: Practice
The Bay Area Male Involvement Network (BAMIN) is a partnership of several San Francisco Bay Area child services agencies working to increase the involvement of fathers and other significant men in the lives of children in the region. The agencies are located in Berkeley, Daly City, Emeryville, San Jose, San Francisco, Marin County, Napa County, and San Mateo County. BAMIN is affiliated with the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families and the Fatherhood Project of the Families and Work Institute (see below for more information on both organizations) and is funded by grants from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and other sources.

BAMIN has five specific goals:

1. To reduce or eliminate barriers to male involvement in programs;
2. To increase male involvement in programs;
3. To increase the number of men on these programs' staffs and boards;

4. To create a power base to deal with social policy and legislative issues affecting men in the lives of children; and
5. To change the culture of agencies that have young families as their target group to heighten the importance of fathers and other significant men in the lives of children.

To achieve these goals, BAMIN offers technical assistance, consultation, and a male involvement curriculum that teaches early childhood education concepts to teachers and other human service professionals. BAMIN also addresses social policy and legislative issues affecting men. To promote agency reform, BAMIN establishes criteria for father-friendly agencies, schools, and organizations and issues awards to those organizations that achieve father-friendly status. The network also supports male involvement programs include an ESL program, a Father's Breakfast Group, the Father-to-Father Mentoring Program, and a Father Support Group.

BAMIN publishes a newsletter and supports a website (www.bamin.org) that disseminates news about activities, social issues, and legislation and features on the work of member agencies. It also sponsors an annual conference, "Celebrating Men in the Lives of Children," for men who care for and about children in child care and other settings. BAMIN has established the Bay Area Child Caring Man of the Year Award to honor a man who has made an outstanding contribution to the lives of children.

Network Members. All member agencies have as their primary mission to care for children or to serve families; their male involvement work is an important, but secondary mission. An important task for all network members is to help agencies and social service providers add a male involvement component to their existing programs so that overall effectiveness of their work increases. Since each agency has a unique blend of strengths and resources, no single approach serves every situation; however Dr. James Levine's book, *Getting Men Involved* serves as a basic resource. Agencies select the activity or group of activities that seem best suited to its own population, resources, and interests. Agencies may take as their starting point staff training, organization of social activities that include men, or changing the physical environment to be more father-friendly. As network members gain experience, they usually begin to involve men in organizations' Boards of Directors, make efforts to recruit male staff members, and become active in social policy issues affecting men.

Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth

P.O. Box 489
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024-0489
Phone: 800-292-6149 or 913-713-6111
E-mail: ccfy@gkccf.org
Contact: Cindy Sesler Ballard, Executive Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

The Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (CCFY) is a network of over 135 community foundations in communities across the United States dedicated to securing improved conditions for children, youth, and families. Initiated with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, CCFY is now supported by more than a dozen national foundations and more than 50 of its own members.

The Fathers Workshop, Erie Family Center

1151 Atkins Street
Erie, PA 16503
Phone: 814-871-6683
Fax: 814-871-6694
Email: fathers@erie.net
URL: http://www.thefathersworkshop.org
Contact: Randall Turner, Director

Scope: Local **Focus:** Practice

The Fathers Workshop is dedicated to supporting, counseling, educating, advocating, and challenging fathers to become a strong positive force within their families. Its "Long Distance Dads" program is a character-based educational and support program to assist incarcerated men to become better fathers. The workshop's "FatherHOOD 101" program is designed to help teen fathers become responsible parents.

Family Support America (formerly Family Resource Coalition of America)

20 N. Wacker CF, Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60606-2901
Phone: 312-338-0900
Fax: 312-338-1522
URL: http://www.familysupportamerica.org
Contacts: Virginia Mason, Executive Director; Kirk Harris, General Counsel and Associate Executive Director of Knowledge and Policy

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice/Policy and Advocacy

The Family Support America is working to bring about a completely new societal response to children, youth, and their families—one that strengthens and empowers families and communities to foster the optimal development of children, youth, and adults. Family Support America's membership brings together community-based program providers, school personnel, human services professionals, trainers, scholars, and policymakers.

Father Resource Program

Wishard Memorial Hospital
1001 West 10th St., Meyers Building, Room 1017
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Phone: 317-630-2486
Contact: Wallace McLaughlin, Director

Scope: Local **Focus:** Practice

The primary goals of the Father Resource Program (FRP) are to: (1) develop the capacity of young fathers to become responsible and involved parents, wage-earners, and providers of child support; and (2) assist fathers with developing the skills and behaviors necessary to cooperate in the care of their children, regardless of the character of their relationship with the mother.

Father to Father Project

Children, Youth, and Family Consortium
University of Minnesota
12 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
Phone: 612-625-8285

Fax: 612-626-1210
URL: http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Fathernet
Contacts: Martha Farrell Erickson, Director; Michael Tratt, Coordinator

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice
Father to Father is a national effort to unite men in the task of being a strong and positive force in their children's lives. With assistance from central resource teams, local communities or agencies that choose to participate in Father to Father will develop their own plan to: expand and enhance existing father support programs; create new opportunities for men to come together one-to-one or in groups to support each other in their role as fathers; and rally businesses, congregations, schools, and agencies to focus on the importance of fathers in children's lives.

FatherWork

Family Studies Center, Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602
Phone: 801-378-4452
URL: http://fatherwork.byu.edu
Contact: Alan J. Hawkins and David C. Dollahite, Founders

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice/Research
FatherWork founders believe that many fathers today are exploring unmapped territory in their efforts to care for their children. As an online resource, FatherWork provides interesting, informative, and inspiring stories and experiences to help fathers find their own unique and creative ways to meet the needs of children, as well as to assist practitioners.

Fathers' Forum Online

URL: http://www.fathersforum.com
Email: drlinton@fathersforum.com
Contact: Bruce Linton, Founder

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice
This forum helps new fathers to understand their roles through ongoing dialogues about the day-to-day stresses and difficulties of fatherhood and parenting. The specific focus of the Fathers' Forum is on expectant and new fathers, and the project reports it is committed to assisting fathers in the early years of parenting.

Goodwill Industries - Children UpFront Program

524 Main Street, Suite 213
Racine, WI 53403-1099
Phone: 414-631-7744
Fax: 414-631-7749
Contact: Jerry Hamilton, Manager of Disadvantage Programs

Scope: Local **Focus:** Practice
Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin operates several programs serving fathers in Racine County that fall under an umbrella program, titled "Children Upfront." The fathering programs include Children First and the Young Fathers Program. The main goals of the Goodwill fatherhood program are to identify noncustodial fathers and reconnect them with their children, as well as to facilitate the father's ability to serve as a provider for his children. A primary goal of the program is to engage the father in job seeking and employment activities and to ultimately increase the level and consistency of child support he provides.

The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood & Family Revitalization

National Office
146 19th Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036-3703
Phone: 202-293-4420
Fax: 202-293-4288
E-mail: CharlesBallard@responsiblefatherhood.org
URL: www.responsiblefatherhood.org
Contact: Charles Ballard, Chief Executive Officer

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood & Family Revitalization was established in March 1994. Its mission is to encourage fathers to become involved in the lives of their children in a loving, compassionate, and nurturing way. The national organization was based on a model program established in Cleveland, Ohio. The institute now operates six sites across the country that provide innovative nontraditional, home-based services to fathers and their families: one-to-one outreach; one-to-group outreach; and family outreach. The institute's goal is to begin connecting fathers with their children, their families, and with their communities.

MAD DADS, Inc.

Men Against Destruction Defending Against Drugs and Social-Disorder (MAD DADS, Inc.)
National Headquarters
3030 Sprague Street
Omaha, NE 68111
Phone: 402-451-3500
E-mail: maddadsnational@nfinity.com
URL: http://www.maddadsnational.com
Contact: Eddie F. Staton

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

MAD DADS, Inc. was founded in May of 1989 by a group of concerned parents in Omaha, Nebraska, who were seeking solutions to gang violence and the flow of illegal drugs into their communities. Beginning with only 18 men in Omaha, MAD DADS has grown to include 45,000 men nationally, with 52 chapters in 14 states. Chapter locations include: Maryland, Iowa, Ohio, Texas, Colorado, 36 cities in Florida, Mississippi, New York, Tennessee, Illinois, California, Michigan, and New Jersey. Some chapters have established divisions of MOMS and KIDS.

National Center for Fathering

P.O. Box 413888
Kansas City, MO 64141
Phone: 800-593-DADS
Fax: 913-384-4665
Email: dads@fathers.com
URL: http://www.fathers.com
Contact: Ken Canfield, President

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

The mission of the National Center for Fathering (NCF) is to inspire and equip men to become better fathers. The center was founded in 1990 by Dr. Ken Canfield in response to what he perceives as a "dramatic trend toward fatherlessness in America." NCF conducts research on fathers and fathering and develops practical resources for fathers.

National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth

P.O. Box 13505
Silver Spring, MD 20911-3505
Phone: 301-608-8098 (Tel/TTY)
Fax: 301-608-8721
Email: info@ncfy.com
URL: http://www.ncfy.com

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

The National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth (NCFY) is the Family and Youth Services Bureau's (FYSB's) central resource on youth and family policy and practice. FYSB is a bureau within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

National Fathers Network

16120 NE Eighth Street
Bellevue, WA 98008
Phone: 206-747-4004
Email: jmay@fathersnetwork.org
URL: http://www.fathersnetwork.org/mn/index1.html
Contact: James May, Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice /Policy and Advocacy

The National Fathers Network (NFN), a nonprofit organization funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, advocates for men as being crucially important in the lives of their families and children. It provides support and resources to fathers and families of children with developmental disabilities and chronic illness, as well as the professionals who serve them. Among the resources it offers, the NFN develops support programs and produces curriculum and training materials for health care providers and educators. Due to a lack of funding, this organization currently only maintains a website of information for fathers.

National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families

1003 K Street, NW, Suite 565
Washington DC 20001
Phone: 800-34-NPNFF or 202-737-6680
Fax: 202-737-6683
Email: info@npnff.org
URL: www.npnff.org
Contact: Preston Garrison, Executive Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Practice

The National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF) is a national, individual membership organization whose mission is to build the profession of practitioners working to advance the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. NPNFF's goal is to foster education, communication, program development, and collaboration among individuals working in father-focused programs and agencies. Through its publications, conferences, training events, technical assistance services, advocacy, collaboration with other fathers and families organizations, and networking opportunities, NPNFF seeks to strengthen practitioners in their day-to-day work with fathers and families.

St. Bernadine's Male Involvement Project

3814 Edmondson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21229
Phone: 410-233-4500
Fax: 410-362-6720
Contact: Sheila Tucker, Director

Scope: Local **Focus:** Practice

The Male Involvement Project (MIP) is operated through the St. Bernadine's Head Start program, located in Baltimore, Maryland. Its primary goals are to link men as role models with children participating in the Head Start program and to assist men in dealing with their needs so they may develop the capacity to care for their children.

Washington State Fathers Network

Kindering Center
16120 NE Eighth Avenue
Bellevue, WA 98008-3937
Phone: 425-747-4004, ext. 218 or 206-284-2859
Fax: 425-747-1069 or 206-284-9664
Email: jmay@fathersnetwork.org or pblair@fathersnetwork.org
Contact: James May, Project Coordinator

Scope: Local **Focus:** Practice/Policy and Advocacy

The Washington State Fathers Network advocates and provides support and resources for all men and their families who have children with special needs. It is funded by the Office of Children with Special Health Care Needs of the Washington State Department of Health. The mission of the network is to promote fathers as crucially important people in their children's and families' lives. The network attempts to accomplish this goal through a variety of means, including hosting a statewide steering committee, offering father support programs, maintaining a telephone hotline, providing resources over the Internet, and sponsoring father programs.

Policy and Advocacy Organizations

Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy

23 North Pinckney Street, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-257-3148
Fax: 608-257-4686
Email: dpate@cffpp.org, ssussman@cffpp.org
URL: www.cffpp.org
Contact: David Pate, Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy

The Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy (CFFPP) is a nonprofit organization that works to improve outcomes for low-income families. Its mission is to help create a society in which parents, whether they are married or not, can work together to support their children emotionally, financially, and physically. To this end, CFFPP challenges the negative public perception of low-income fathers, who potentially have much to contribute to their children in the way of support. Through the provision of technical assistance, policy research, and public education, CFFPP works to place child welfare at the center of public attention.

Dads and Daughters

P.O. Box 3458
Duluth, MN 55803
Phone: 888-824-DADS
Fax: 218-728-1997
Email: joe@dadsanddaughters
URL: http://www.dadsanddaughters.org
Contact: Joe Kelly, Executive Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Advocacy

Dads and Daughters (DADS) is a network of fathers seeking to improve the lives of girls in general and to play a greater role in their daughters' lives. DADS believes that fathers can make a substantial difference in influencing their daughters' self-perceptions and self-esteem. One of DADS' initiatives is to promote policies that focus on healthy body images for girls, seeking to eliminate the potentially negative effects of advertising, diets, and an image-conscious society on their self-image.

Florida Commission on Responsible Fatherhood

111 North Gadsden Street, Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Phone 850-488-4952
Fax 850-488-6607
URL: http://www.fcorf.org/index.html
Contact: Matthew D. Munyon, Executive Director

Scope: Statewide **Focus:** Policy/Practice

The Commission's goals are to: (1) raise public awareness of the problems that can result when a child grows up without a responsible father present; (2) identify obstacles that impede or prevent the involvement of responsible fathers in the lives of their children; and (3) promote successful strategies to encourage responsible fatherhood.

National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership

1133 20th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 888-528-NPCL
Fax: 202-822-5699
Email: info@npcl.org
URL: http://www.npcl.org/index.htm
Contact: Jeffrey Johnson, President and CEO

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy

The National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the governance and administration of nonprofit tax-exempt organizations and strengthen community leadership through family and neighborhood empowerment. One of NPCL's initiatives is "The Partners for Fragile Families Project (PFF)." PFF is the first comprehensive national initiative designed to help poor single fathers pull themselves out of poverty and build stronger links to their children and their children's mothers. PFF was established in 1996 to provide support for these "fragile families," which are defined as low-income, never-married parents and their children.

National Fatherhood Initiative

One Bank Street, Suite 160
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Phone: 301-948-0599
Fax: 301-948-4325
Email: nfi1995@aol.com
URL: http://fatherhood.org
Contact: Wade Horn, President

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy
The mission of the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) is to improve the well-being of children by increasing the number of children growing up with loving, committed, and responsible fathers. A nonprofit, nonsectarian, nonpartisan organization, NFI conducts public awareness campaigns promoting responsible fatherhood; organizes conferences and community fatherhood forums; provides resource material to organizations seeking to establish support programs for fathers; publishes a quarterly newsletter; and disseminates information to men seeking to become more effective fathers.

National Governors' Association Center for Best Practices

444 North Capital Street, Suite 267
Washington, DC 20001-1512
Phone: 202-624-5427
Fax: 202-624-5313
E-mail: tmaclellan@nga.org
URL: http://www.nga.org
Contact: Thomas MacLellan, Policy Analyst

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy
The center is a nonprofit organization governed by a board of four governors who report to the National Governors' Associations' (NGA) Executive Committee. The board recommends center priorities, provides direction for center projects, and approves the center's annual budget. Under its mandate, the mission of the center is: to identify and share the states' best practices and innovations, including those related to responsible fathering efforts; to provide expert customized technical assistance to governors; to identify emerging issues and assist governors in producing creative and effective responses; to assist governors in developing strategies for evaluating state programs; to explore and develop approaches to transfer responsibility from the federal government to the states and to establish new partnerships among federal, state, and local governments; and to help governors in exploring and developing public and private partnerships.

National Parenting Association

51 W. 74th Street, Suite 1B
New York, NY 10023
Phone: 212-362-7575
Fax: 212-362-1916
Email: info@parentsunite.org
URL: http://www.parentsunite.org/CFparentsunite/index2.cfm
Contact: Ruth A. Wooden, President

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy
The National Parenting Association (NPA) was founded by author-activist Sylvia Ann Hewlett to give parents a greater voice in the public arena. Its goal is to build a parents' movement that unites mothers and fathers across the nation. NPA and its state partner networks advocate private and public initiatives that provide parents with practical support, inform them about issues, and help them make their voices heard at both the local and federal

levels. They promote positive images of parents and parenting through exhibits, publications, a website, and media campaigns.

Pennsylvania Fatherhood Initiative

Governor's Office
508 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Phone: 717-787-1954
Email: http://www.state.pa.us/Pa_Exec/Governor/govmail.htm
URL: http://www.state.pa.us/fatherhood.html
Contact: Office of Public Liaison

Scope: Statewide **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy
The objectives of the Governors' Task Force on Fatherhood Promotion are threefold: (1) to find new ways that state governments can decrease the incidence of father absence; (2) to encourage the replication of policies and initiatives that have proven effective in inspiring men to be committed, responsible, and involved fathers; and (3) to fuel public and political commitments for bringing fathers back to their children. The initiative's website provides specific information on Governor Tom Ridge's and Pennsylvania's fatherhood promotion initiatives.

Single and Custodial Fathers Network

308 Wilson Place
Apollo, PA 15613
Phone: 724-478-4662 or 877-488-SCFN
Fax: 412-291-1153
Email: scfn@single-fathers.org
URL: http://www.scfn.org
Contact: John Sims, Jr., Founder

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy/Research
The Single and Custodial Father's Network (SCFN) is a member-supported nonprofit organization dedicated to helping fathers meet the challenge of custodial parenthood. SCFN seeks to provide information and support to single and custodial fathers and their families. It seeks to accomplish its mission through education, research, publication, and interactive communication.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 404E
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: 202-690-6806/7507
Fax: 202-690-6562
E-mail: mellgren@osaspe.dhhs.gov
URL: http://aspe.os.hhs.dhhs.gov/fathers/fhoodini.htm
Contact: Linda Mellgren, Social Science Analyst

Scope: National **Focus:** Policy and Advocacy
On June 16, 1995, President Clinton requested every agency of the federal government to review its programs and policies to strengthen the role of fathers in families. Under the leadership of former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala and then-Deputy Secretary Kevin Thurm, the department has undertaken activities that recognize and support the roles of fathers in families. The department's activities account for those circumstances under which increased involvement by a father or a mother may not be in the best interest of the child. This is true for a small number of children, however. The department strongly supports family preservation and reunification efforts when they do not risk the safety of the child.

Research Organizations

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

820 First Street, NE, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-408-1080
Fax: 202-408-1056
URL: http://www.cbpp.org
Contact: Robert Greenstein, Executive Director; Wendell E. Primus, Director of Income Security

Scope: National **Focus:** Research/Policy

Founded in 1981, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) focuses on public policy issues affecting low-income families and individuals. CBPP has attained a national reputation for its capacity to blend rigorous research and analysis for policymakers; for nonprofit organizations at national, state, and local levels; and for the media. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "The Initial Impacts of Welfare Reform on the Economic Well-Being of Single Mother Families" by Wendell E. Primus, Lynette Rawlings, Kathy Larin, Kathryn Porter, August 1999
- "A State Strategy for Increasing Child Support Payments from Low-Income Fathers and Improving the Well-Being of Their Children Through Economic Incentives" by Wendell E. Primus and Charita L. Castro, April 1999

Center for Law and Social Policy

1616 P Street, NW, Suite 150
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-328-5140
Fax: 202-328-5195
URL: http://www.clasp.org
Contact: Alan W. Houseman, Director; Paula Roberts, Senior Staff Attorney, Family Policy

Scope: National **Focus:** Research/Policy

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national nonprofit organization with expertise in both law and policy affecting the poor. Through education, policy research, and advocacy, CLASP seeks to improve the economic security of low-income families with children and secure access for low-income persons to the civil justice system. For over 16 years, CLASP has worked nationally to preserve an effective and professional legal services program. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Pursuing Child Support for Victims of Domestic Violence," by P. Roberts, in R. A. Brandwein (ed.), *Battered Women, Children, and Welfare Reform: The Ties That Bind* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications), 1999
- "Models for Safe Child Support Enforcement" by Vicki Turetsky and Susan Notar, October 1999
- "TANF Funds: A New Resource for Youth Programs" by Marie Cohen, September 1999

Center for Policy Research

1570 Emerson Street
Denver, CO 80218
Phone: 303-837-1555
Fax: 303-837-1557
Contact: Jessica Pearson, Director

Scope: National **Focus**: Research

The Center for Policy Research (CPR) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation established in 1981 to work with public and private sector service providers to plan, develop, and test projects that improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the justice system and human service agencies. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "An Evaluation of the Parent Opportunity Project" by J. Pearson and N. Thoennes. Denver: Center for Policy Research. January 1999

- "Programs to Increase Fathers' Access to Their Children," by J. Pearson and N. Thoennes, in I. Garfinkel, S. McClanahan, D. Meyer, and J. Seltzer (eds.), *Fathers Under Fire: The Revolution in Child Support Enforcement* New York: Russell Sage Foundation. 1998

- "Parenting Alone to Multiple Caregivers: Child Care and Parenting Arrangements in Black and White Families," by A. Huner, J. Pearson, N. Jalongo, and S. Kellam, in *Family Relations*, 47(4):343-353

Child Trends, Inc.

4301 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: 202-362-5580
Fax: 202-362-5533
URL: http://www.childtrends.org
Contact: Kristin Moore, President

Scope: National **Focus**: Research

Child Trends, Inc. is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization dedicated to studying children, youth, and families through research, data collection, and data analyses. Established in 1979, Child Trends conducts basic research and evaluation studies in several critical areas of adolescent pregnancy and childbearing, and the effects of welfare and poverty, among others. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "What Policymakers Need to Know About Fathers" by T. Halle, K. Moore, A. Greene, and S. LeMenestrel, *Policy & Practice*, December 1999

- "Nurturing Fatherhood: Improving Data and Research on Male Fertility, Family Formation, and Fatherhood," Child Trends Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, Washington, DC

Fatherhood Project, Families and Work Institute

330 Seventh Ave., 14th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Phone 212-465-2044, Ext.237
URL: http://www.fatherhoodproject.org
Contact: James Levine, Director; Ed Pitt, Associate Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Research

The Fatherhood Project is a national research and education project that is examining the future of fatherhood and developing ways to support men's involvement in child rearing. Its books, films, consultation, seminars, and training all present practical strategies to support fathers and mothers in their parenting roles. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- The "Working Fathers" project, ongoing research into best practices and strategies for helping fathers balance work and family life, which has produced the DaddyStress/DaddySuccess program and executive briefings on DaddyStrategy

- The "Male Involvement" project, a national training initiative that helps Head Start and early childhood programs get fathers and other significant men involved in their programs and the lives of their children

Harvard Family Research Project

38 Concord Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
Phone: 617-495-9108
Fax: 617-495-8594
Email: hfrp_gse@harvard.edu
URL: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/
Contact: Heather Weiss, Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Research

Founded in 1983 by Dr. Heather Weiss, the Harvard Family Research Project conducts research on programs and policies that serve children and families throughout the United States. While informing program and policy development at the state and national levels, HFRP advances evaluation practice. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Promising Practices for Family Involvement," by Holly Kreider and M. Elena Lopez, in *Principal*, 78(3):16-19

Joint Center for Poverty Research

Northwestern University
Institute for Policy Research
2046 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60208
Phone: 847-491-4145
Fax: 847-467-2459
Email: povcen@nwu.edu
URL: http://www.jcpr.org
Contact: Susan Mayer, Executive Director

University of Chicago
Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies
1155 E. 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
Phone: 773-702-0472
Fax: 773-702-0926
Email: jcpr@uchicago.edu
URL: http://www.jcpr.org

Scope: National **Focus:** Research/Policy

The Northwestern University and University of Chicago Joint Center for Poverty Research supports academic

research that examines the causes and consequences of poverty in America and the effectiveness of policies aimed at reducing poverty. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Economic Conditions and Welfare Reform," by S. Danziger (Kalamazoo, MI: W. E. Upjohn Institute for Welfare Reform), 1999

- "Financial Incentives for Increasing Work and Income Among Low-Income Families," by Rebecca M. Blank, David Card, and Philip K. Robins (Prepared for the Conference: "Labor Markets and Less Skilled Workers" sponsored by the Joint Center for Poverty Research, November 5-6, 1998; Revised: February 1999)

- "Barriers to the Employment of Welfare Recipients," by Sandra Danziger, Mary Corcoran, Sheldon Danziger, Colleen Heflin, Ariel Kalil, Judith Levine, Daniel Rosen, Kristin Seefeldt, Kristine Siefert, and Richard Tolman (Prepared for the JCPR conference, "Labor Markets and Less Skilled Workers," held November 5-6, 1998 in Washington, DC; Revised April 1999)

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation

16 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016-4326
Phone: 212-532-3200
Fax: 212-684-0832
Email: information@mdrc.org
URL: http://www.mdrc.org
Contact: Judith M. Gueron, President; Virginia Knox, Senior Research Associate; Gordon Berlin, Senior Vice President

Scope: National **Focus:** Research
The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) conducts primary research on a variety of issues related to helping families obtain economic independence, including teen pregnancy and fatherhood issues. MDRC then uses this research to design and implement demonstration projects throughout the United States. Recent work on fathers and families include:

- "Promoting Participation: How to Increase Involvement in Welfare-to-Work Activities," G. Hamilton and S. Scriveber (New York: MDRC), September 1999

- "Fathers' Fair Share: Helping Poor Men Manage Child Support and Fatherhood, A Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation Study," by E. Johnson, A. Levine, and F. Doolittle (New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation), April 1999

Motivational Educational Entertainment Productions, Inc.

340 North 12th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-829-4920
Fax: 215-829-4903
Email: info@meeproductions.com
URL: http://meeproductions.com
Contact: Ivan Juzang, President

Scope: National **Focus:** Research
Motivational Education Entertainment (MEE) Productions, Inc., is a communications firm that develops socially responsible, research-based communication strategies targeting African Americans, urban populations, and low-income youth. MEE's mission is to understand, reach, and positively affect urban youth living in at-risk environments.

National Center for Children in Poverty

The Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University
154 Haven Avenue
New York, NY 10032
Phone: 212-304-7100
Fax: 212-544-4200
Email: jla12@columbia.edu
URL: http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/
Contact: J. Lawrence Aber, Director; Jane Knitzer, Deputy Director for Program and Policy Analysis; Stanley Bernard, Director for Administration and Human Services

Scope: National **Focus:** Research
The mission of the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) is to identify and promote strategies that reduce the number of young children living in poverty in the United States, as well as to improve the life chances of the millions of children under age six who are growing up in poverty.

National Center on Fathers and Families

Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania
3700 Walnut Street, Box 58
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6216
Phone: 215-573-5500
Fax: 215-573-5508
Email: mailbox@ncoff.gse.upenn.edu
URL: www.upenn.edu/gse/ncoff
Contact: Vivian Gadsden, Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Research
The mission of the National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) is to improve the life chances of children and the efficacy of families, as well as to support the conducting and dissemination of research that advances the understanding of father involvement. NCOFF was established in July 1994 with core funding from The Annie E. Casey Foundation to develop and implement a research agenda that is practice-focused and practice-derived, to expand the knowledge-base on father involvement and families within multiple disciplines, and to contribute to critical discussions in policy. Recent work on fathers and families include:

- The NCOFF FatherLit Research Database, a compilation of almost 9,000 citations of research articles, reports, books, and related publications covering work over the past 40 years and focused on fathers and their relationship to families and child well-being. The database is updated daily with new research materials and is available online at www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu and on CD-ROM.
- The Family Development Study Group, research teams consisting of researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and analysts, who work together to identify critical research-practice issues within a designated areas—such as fathering and family processes, poverty and social vulnerability, and family structure and development—and who develop and implement research studies collaboratively.
- The Fathering Indicators Framework (FIF) Project is an adaptive evaluation tool designed to help researchers, practitioners, and policymakers measure change in fathering behaviors in relation to child and family well-being. The FIF can be adapted for multiple uses with different populations of fathers and for examining parenting relationships, including cooperative parenting.
- Fatherhood and the Criminal Justice System Study is being conducted in collaboration with the Vera Institute for Justice. It focuses on the status of fatherhood initiatives at the state level and the degree to which emerging, planned, or implemented policies have integrated issues affecting incarcerated fathers and their ability to be involved in their children's lives.

National Council on Family Relations

3989 Central Avenue NE, Suite 550
Minneapolis, MN 55421
Phone: 612-781-9331
Fax: 612-781-9348
URL: http://www.ncfr.com/
Contact: Michael L. Denjan, Executive Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Research

The National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) is a professional association that provides a forum for family researchers, educators, and practitioners to share in the development and dissemination of knowledge about families and family relationships. It also establishes professional standards and works to promote family well-being. NCFR publishes two scholarly journals, the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* and *Family Relations*, and sponsors an annual conference. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Nonresident Fathers and Children's Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis," by P. Amato and J. Gilbreth, in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61(3):557-573

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
31 Center Drive
Building 31, Room 2A03
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: 301-496-5133
URL: www.nichd.nih.gov
Contact: Dr. Duane Alexander, Director; Jeff Evans, Health Sciences Administrator

Scope: National/Federal **Focus:** Research

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) administers a multidisciplinary program of research, research training, and public information—both nationally and within its own facilities—on reproductive biology and population issues; on prenatal development as well as maternal, child, and family health; and on medical rehabilitation. NICHD programs are based on the concepts that adult health and well-being are determined in large part by episodes early in life, that human development is continuous throughout life, and that the reproductive processes and the management of fertility are of major concern, not only to the individual, but to society. NICHD research is also directed toward restoring or maximizing individual potential and functional capacity when disease, injury, or a chronic disorder intervenes in the developmental process.

Public/Private Ventures

One Commerce Square
2005 Market Street, Suite 900
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: 215-557-4400
Fax: 215-557-4469
Email: ppv@epn.org
URL: http://www.ppv.org
Contact: Gary Walker, President

Scope: National **Focus:** Research

Public/Private Ventures (PPV) is a national nonprofit research organization whose mission is to improve the effectiveness of social policies, programs, and community initiatives, particularly as they affect youth and young adults. In carrying out this mission, PPV works with philanthropists, the public and business sectors, and non-profit organizations. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Overcoming Roadblocks on the Way to Work: Bridges to Work Field Report," by M. Elliot, B. Palubinsky, and J. Tierney (Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures, 1999)

The Urban Institute

2100 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: 202-833-7200
Email: paffairs@ui.urban.org
URL: http://www.urban.org/
Contact: William Gorham, President; Elaine Sorenson, Principal Research Associate; Mark Turner, Research Associate

Scope: National **Focus:** Research

A nonprofit policy research organization established in Washington, DC, in 1968, the Institute's goals are to sharpen thinking about society's problems and efforts to solve them, improve government decisions and their implementation, and increase citizens' awareness about important public choices. The Urban Institute brings three critical ingredients to public debates on domestic policy initiatives, particularly those involving fathers and families: accurate data, careful and objective analyses, and perspective. Recent work on fathers and families includes:

- "Testimony of Elaine Sorenson before the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Committee on Ways and Means" (September 23, 1999)
- "Obligating Dads: Helping Low-Income Noncustodial Fathers Do More for Their Children," by Elaine Sorensen, May 1999
- "Child Support Enforcement is Working Better than We Think," by Elaine Sorensen and Ariel Halpern, March 1999

Vera Institute of Justice

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Scope: National **Focus:** Research

Working in collaboration with government, the Vera Institute of Justice designs and implements innovative programs that encourage just practices in public services and improve the quality of urban life. Vera operates its programs only during the demonstration stage. When they succeed, these demonstrations lead to the creation of new government programs, the reform of old ones, or the establishment of nonprofit organizations to carry on Vera's innovations. Recent work on fathers and families includes the Incarcerated Fathers Initiative, which is designed to provide insight into the curricular, institutional, community, and familial settings for incarcerated fathers, as well as the goals and benefits of existing in-prison and community-based programming.

Welfare Information Network
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URL: http://www.welfareinfo.org/fatherho.htm
Contact: Barry L. Van Lare, Executive Director

Scope: National **Focus:** Research
The Welfare Information Network (WIN) provides information on policy choices, promising practices, program and financial data, funding sources, federal and state legislation and plans, program and management tools, and technical assistance. WIN's website provides one-stop access to over 9,000 links dealing with welfare issues on more than 400 sites. WIN is a foundation-funded project to help organizations and individuals obtain the information, policy analysis, and technical assistance they need to develop and implement welfare reforms that will reduce dependency and promote the well-being of children and families.

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